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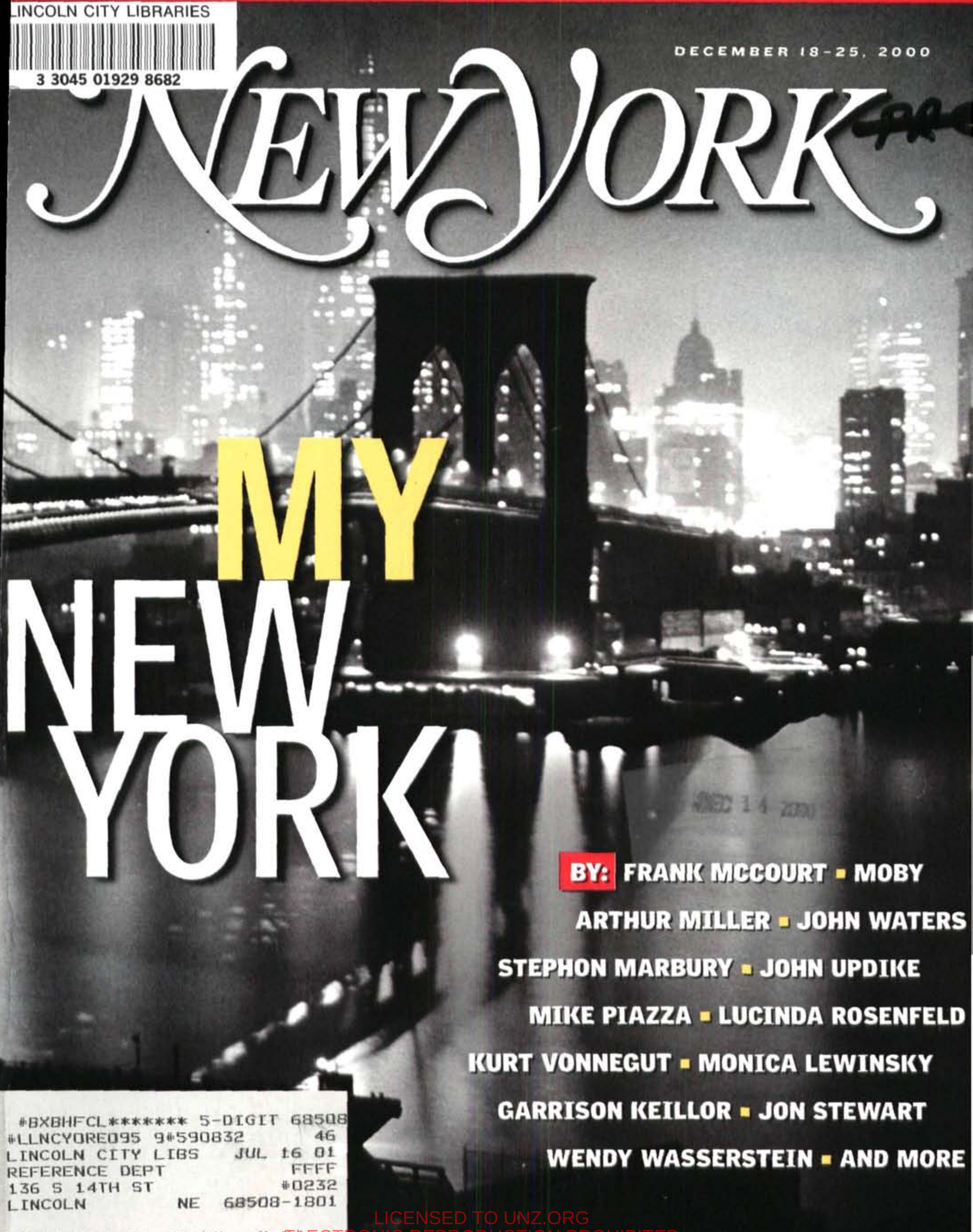

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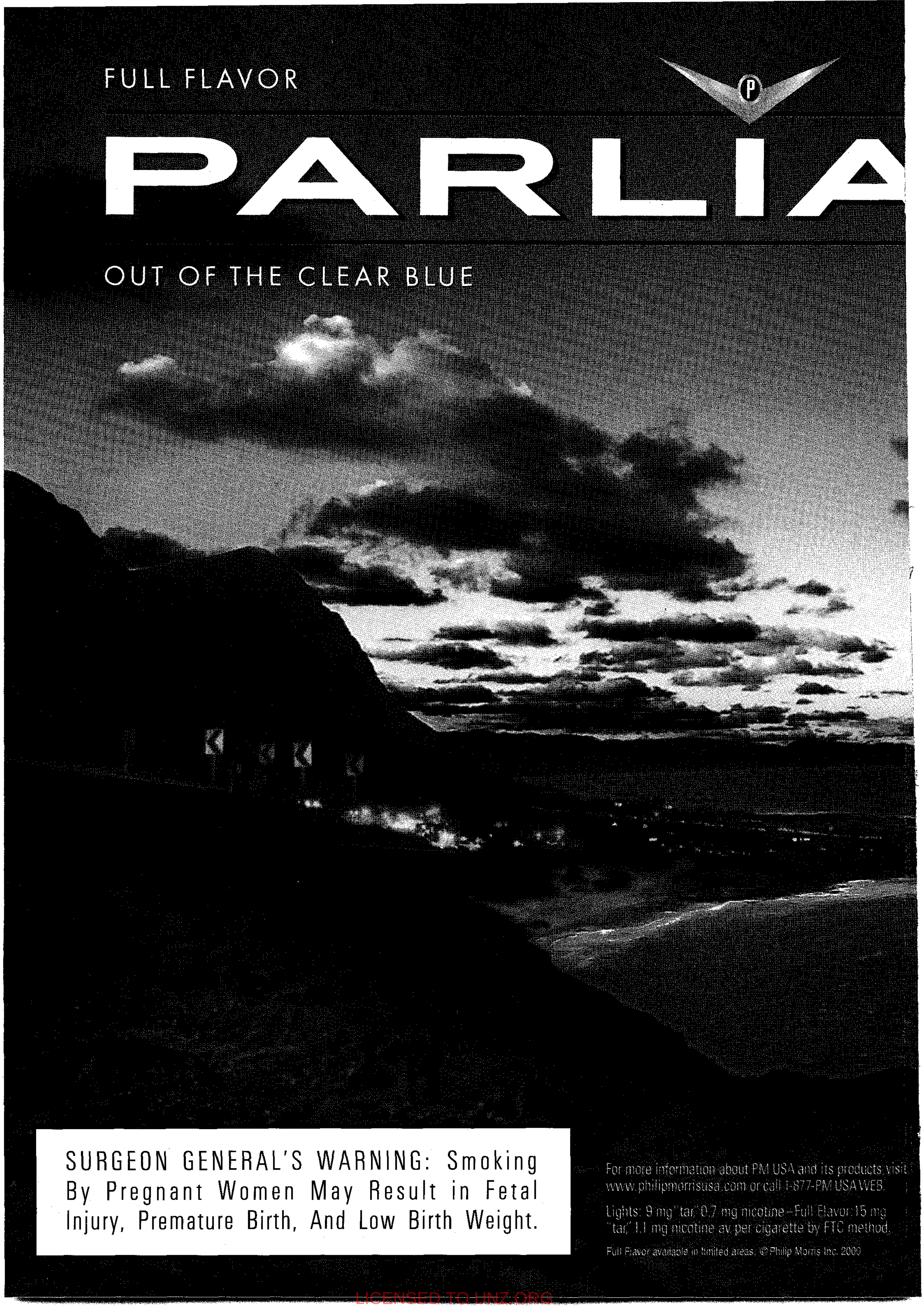

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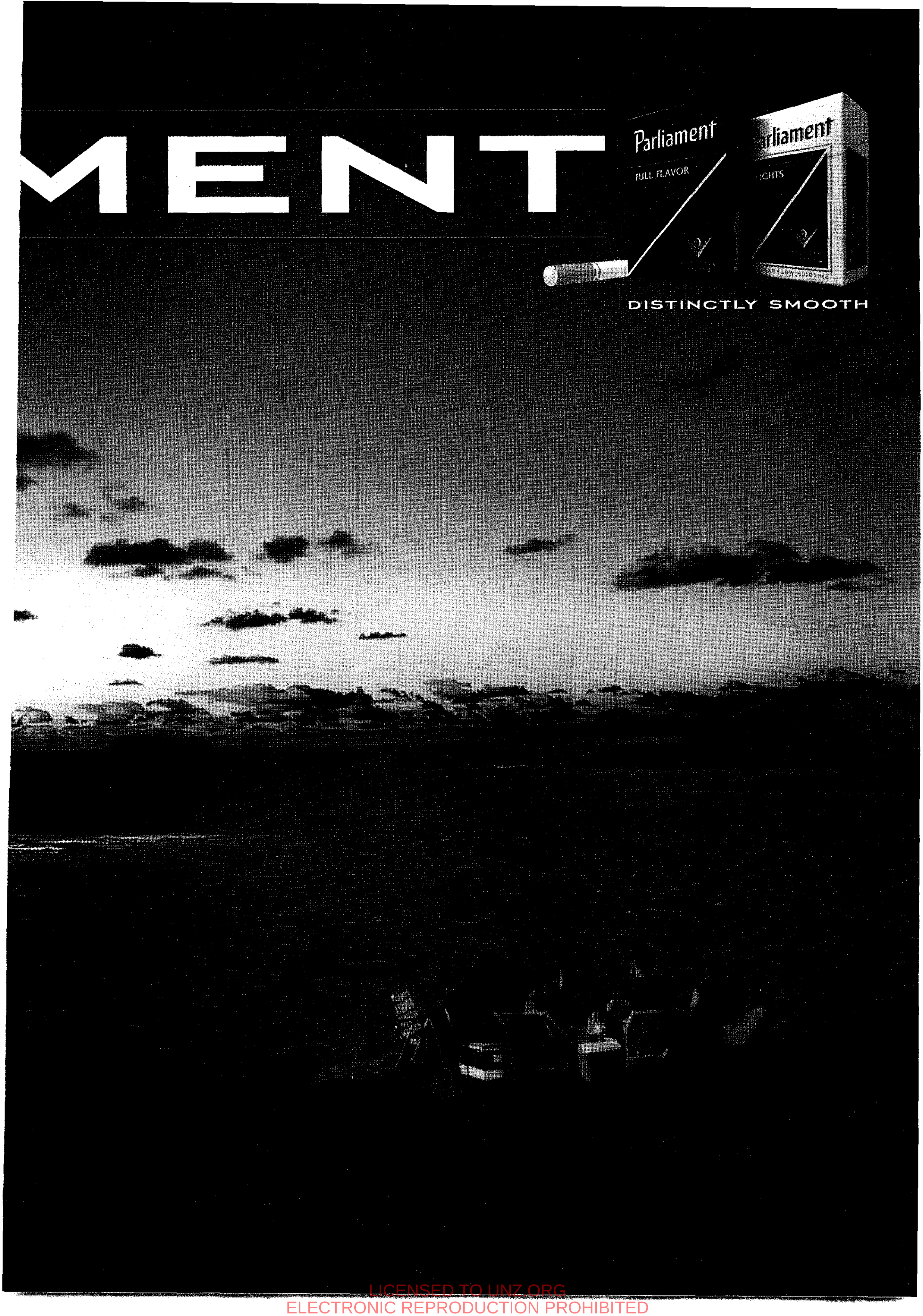
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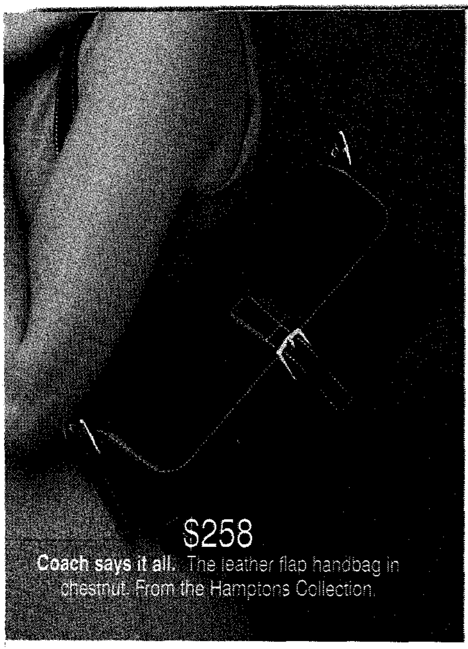

$258

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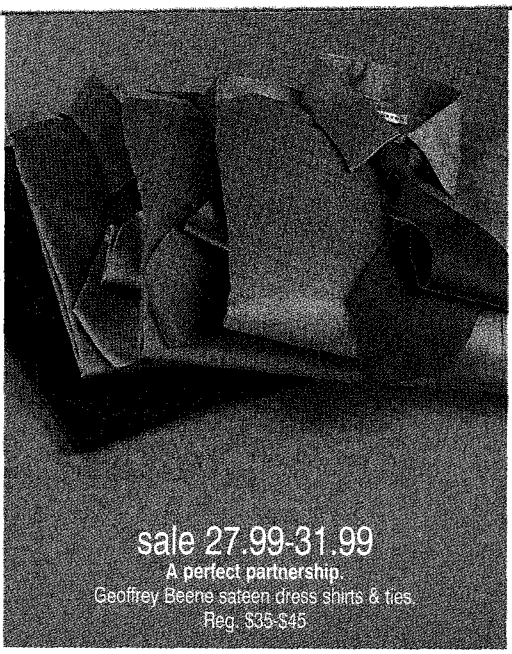

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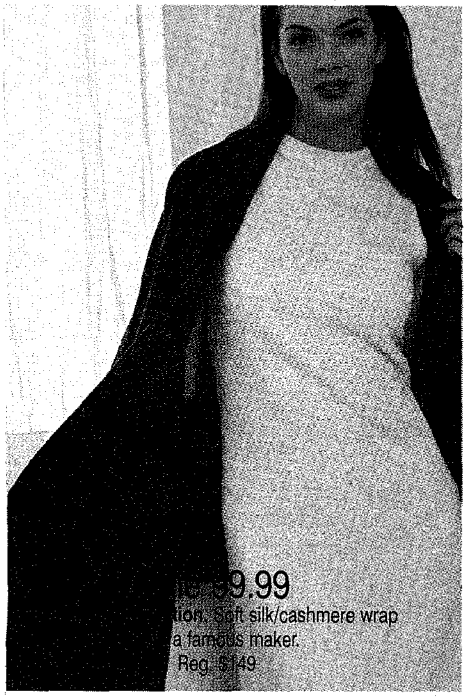

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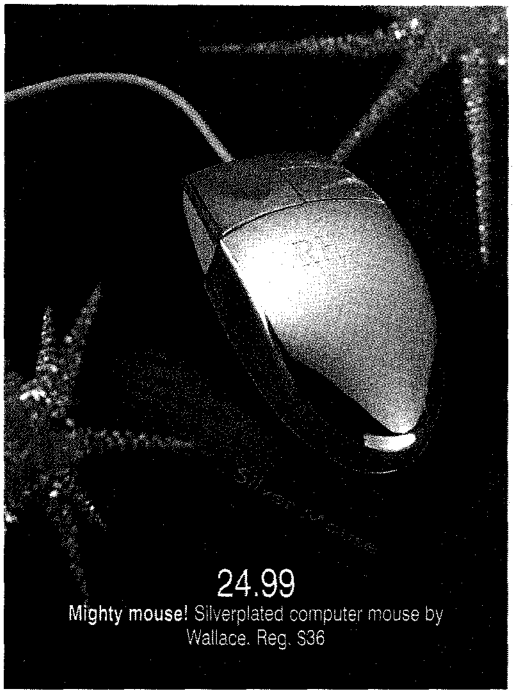

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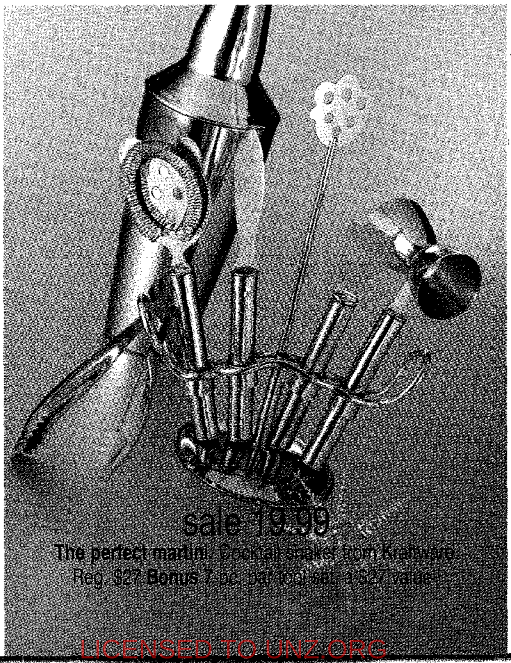

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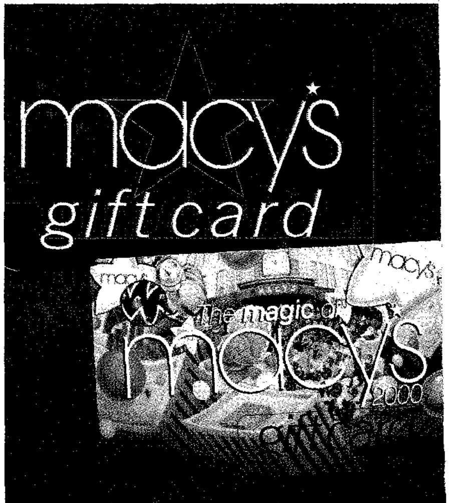

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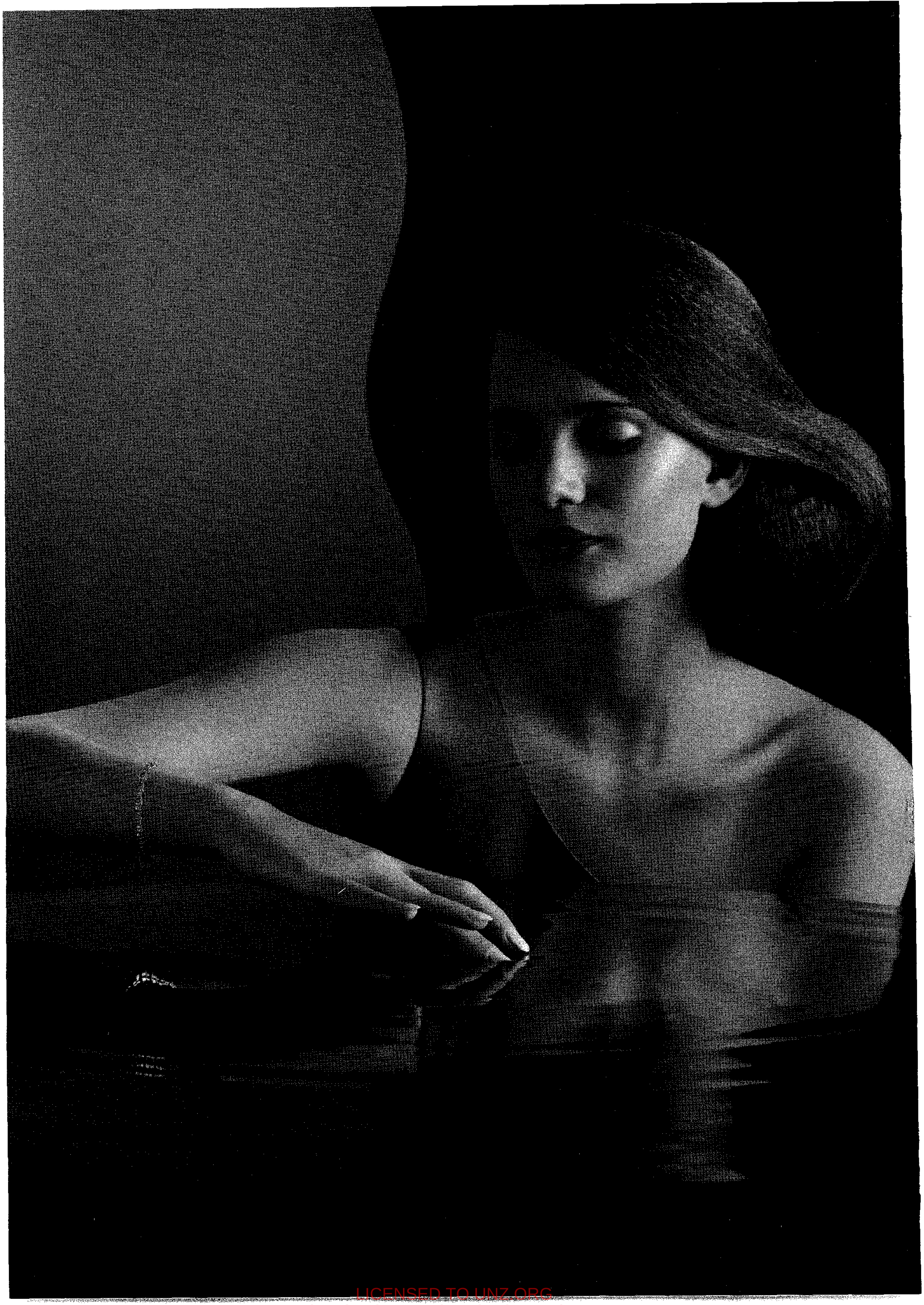

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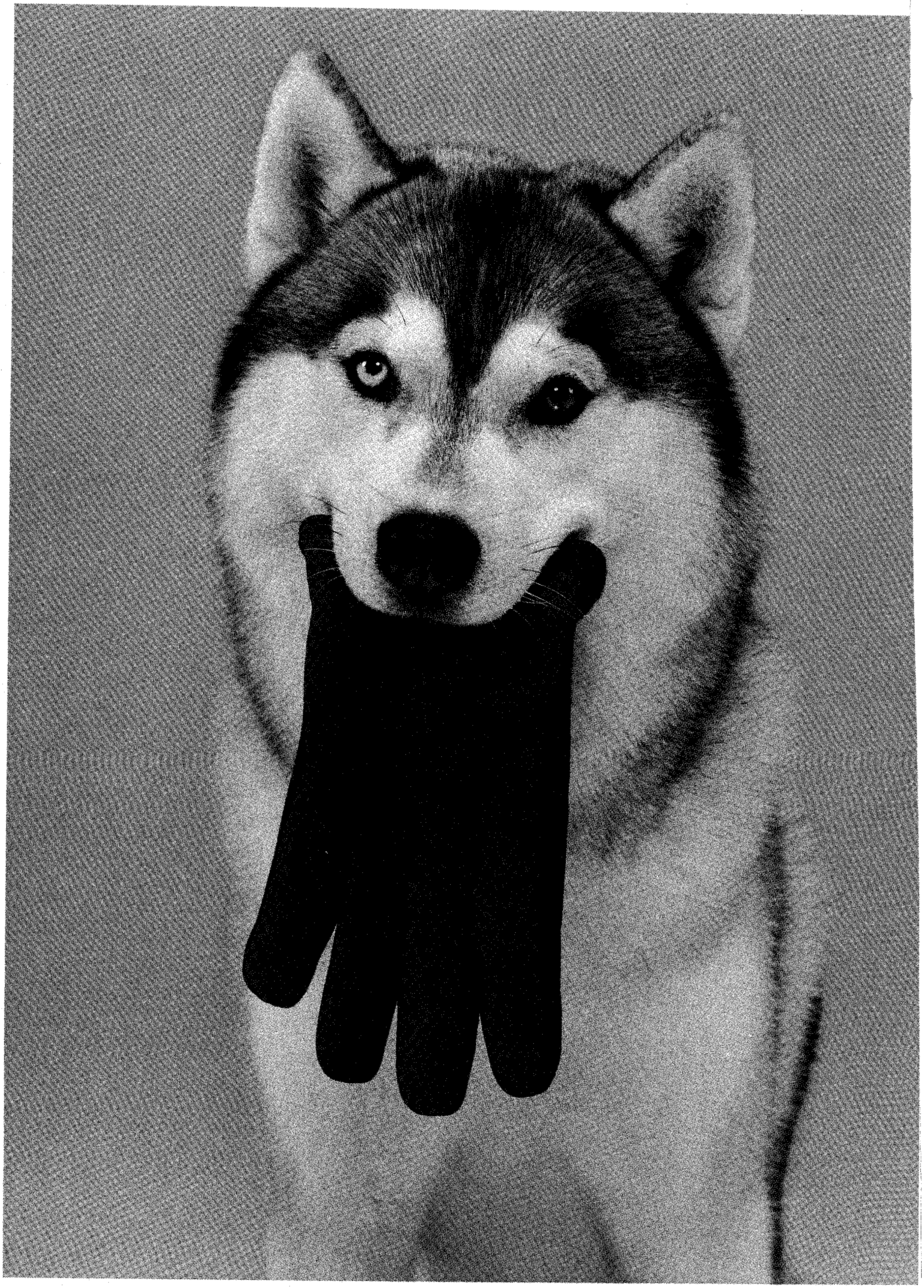

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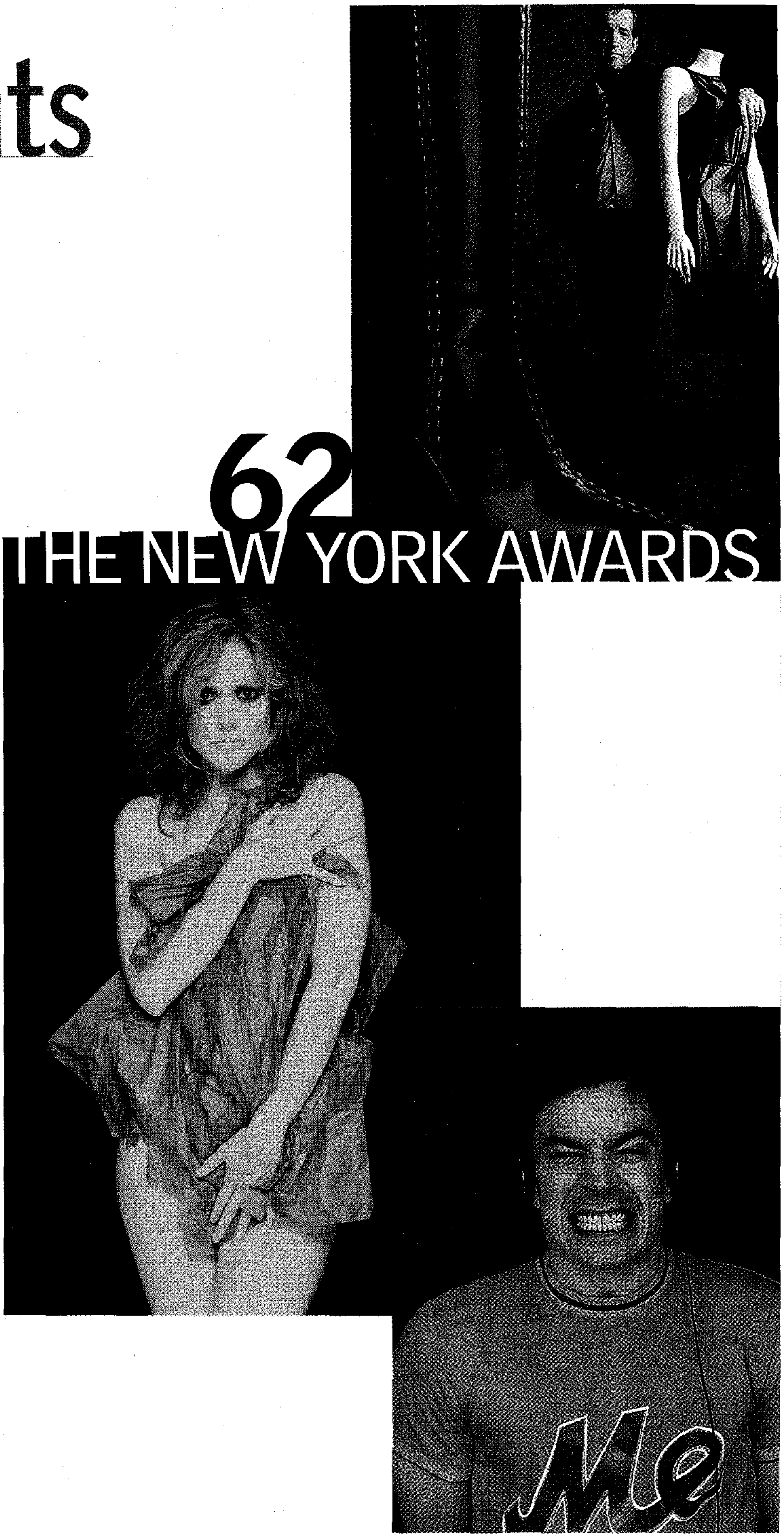
New Yorkers love a winner. Just ask the Yankees, or Hillary. And with our fifth annual New York Awards we celebrate ten of this year's champions, from every field: Mob mother Edie Falco and Mary-Louise Parker, *Proof*'s genius daughter. Designer-with-a-conscience Kenneth Cole and rock bard Lou Reed. Rookie of the Year chef Wylie Dufresne and comic up-and-comer Jimmy Fallon. Internet crusader Darien Dash and community builder Brad Lander. Mets miracle worker John Franco. And the king of the city himself: Regis Philbin. And that's our final answer.



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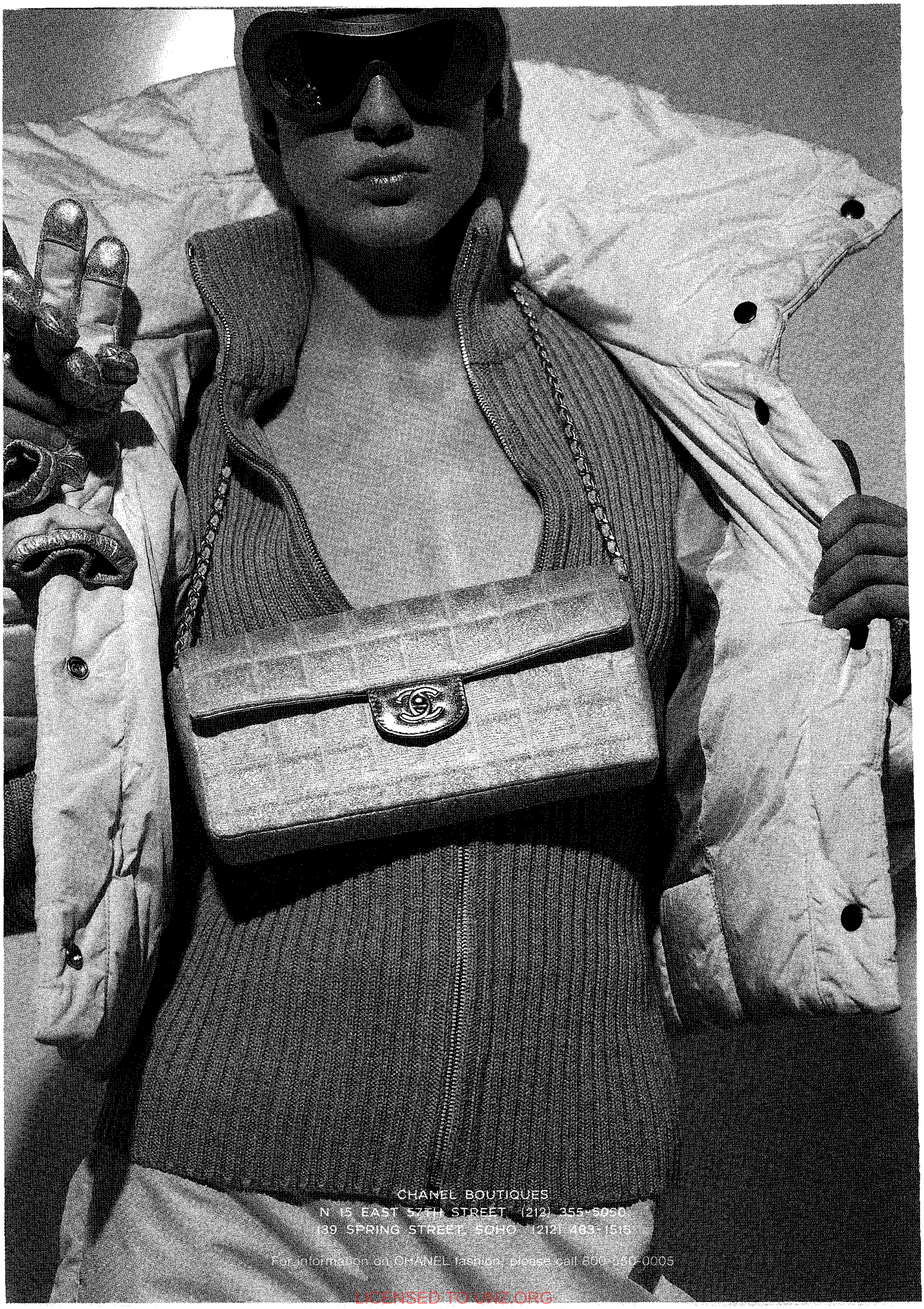
Volume 33, Issue 49



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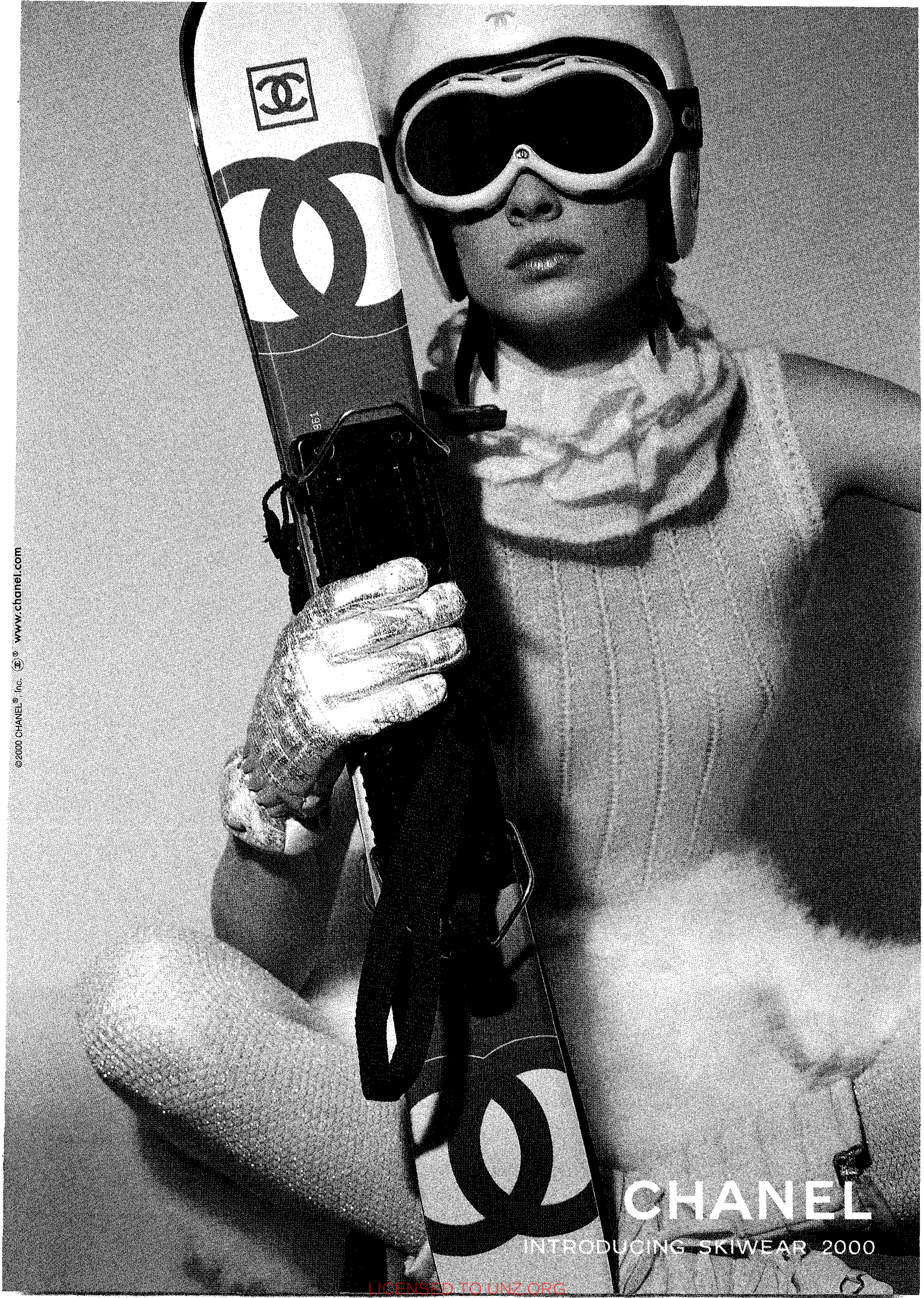
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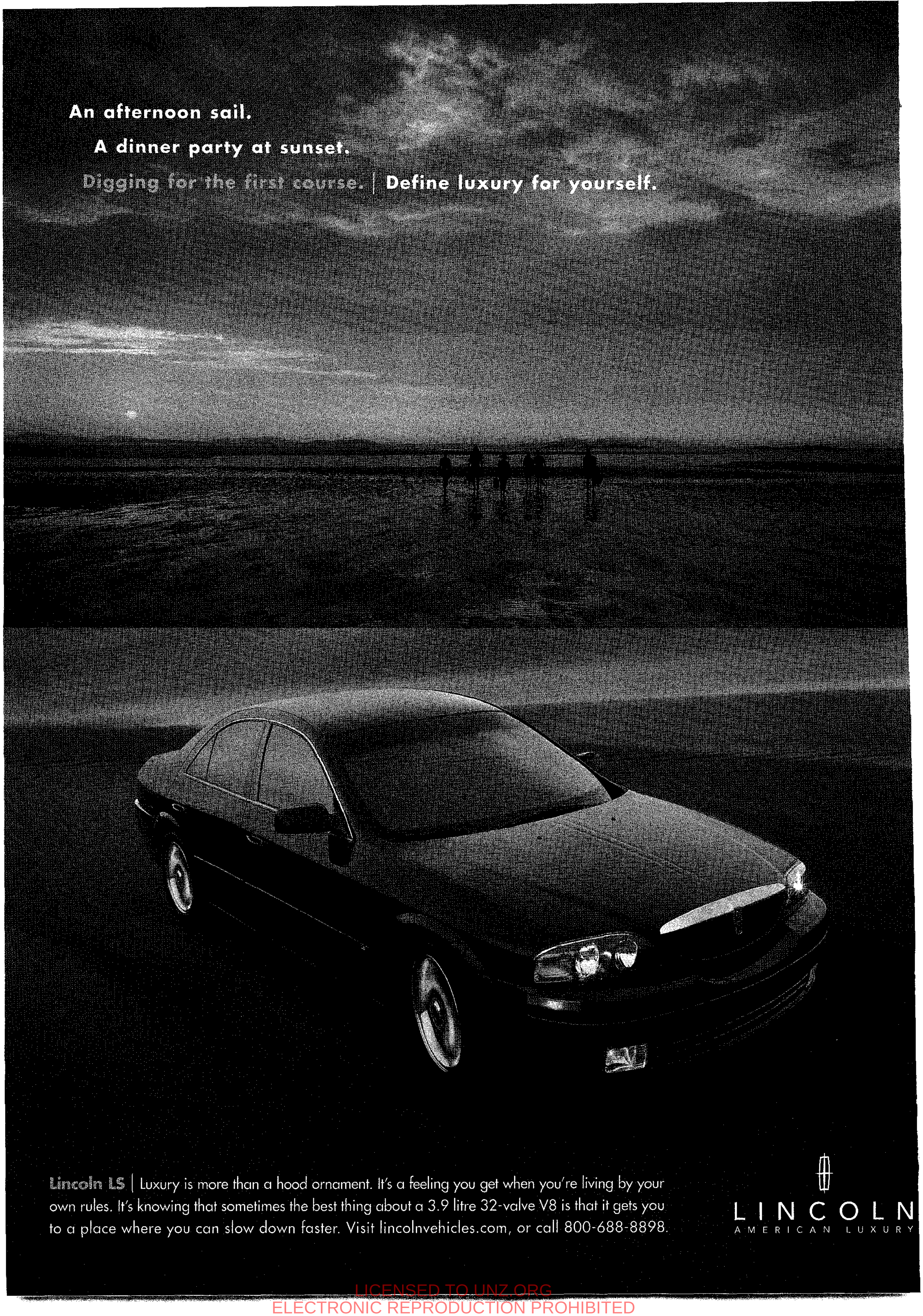
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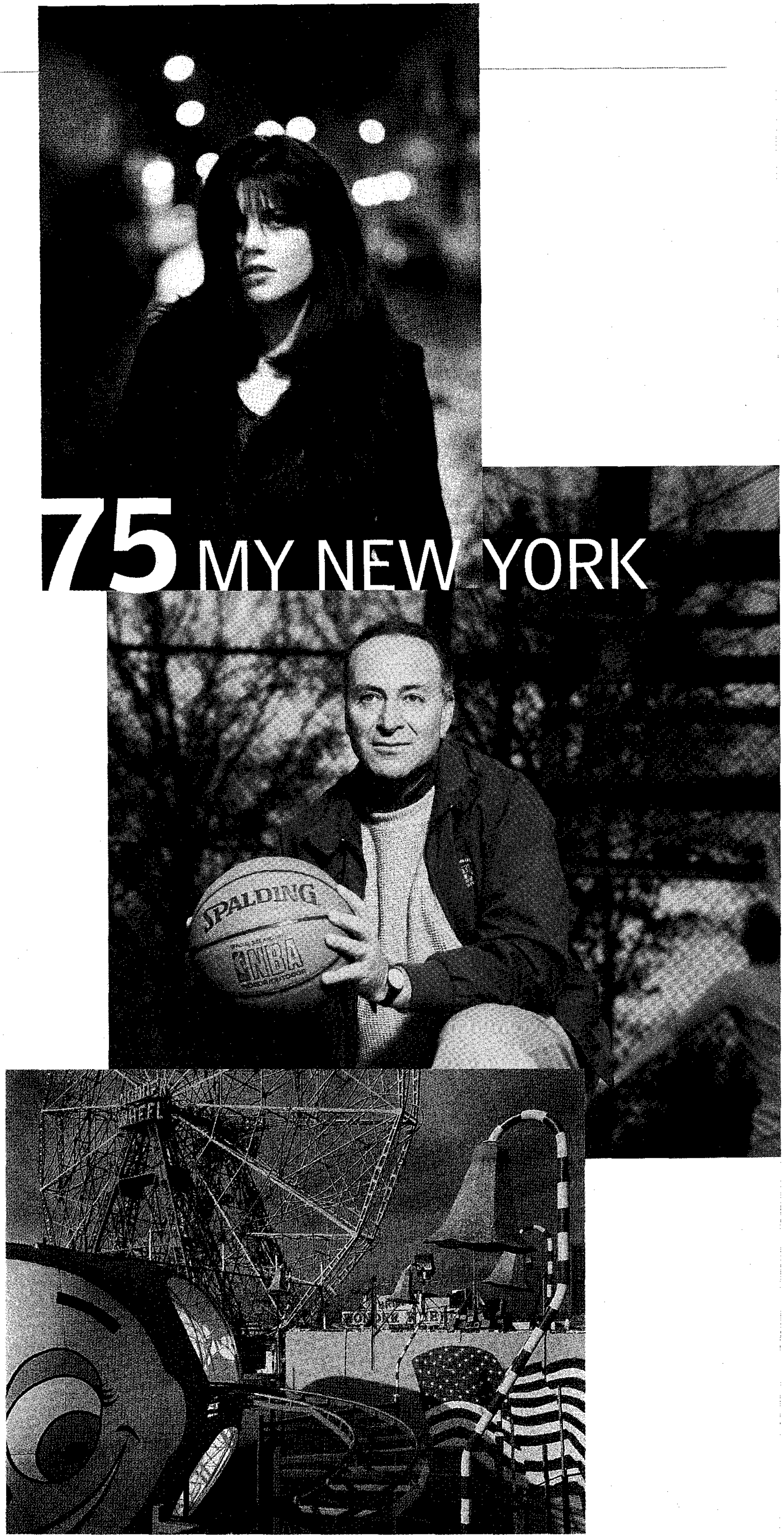
ecember 18–25, 2000

A City of Stories

Laid out on a numbered grid, New York is a snap to navigate. But the city we really inhabit can't be found on a map. To live here for any length of time is to develop a highly personal set of landmarks. For this issue, New Yorkers of all stripes—from John Updike to Moby, Monica Lewinsky to Arthur Miller—talk about the places that tell their own stories. Think of it as a psychic guidebook to the city. It's a place you'll recognize.



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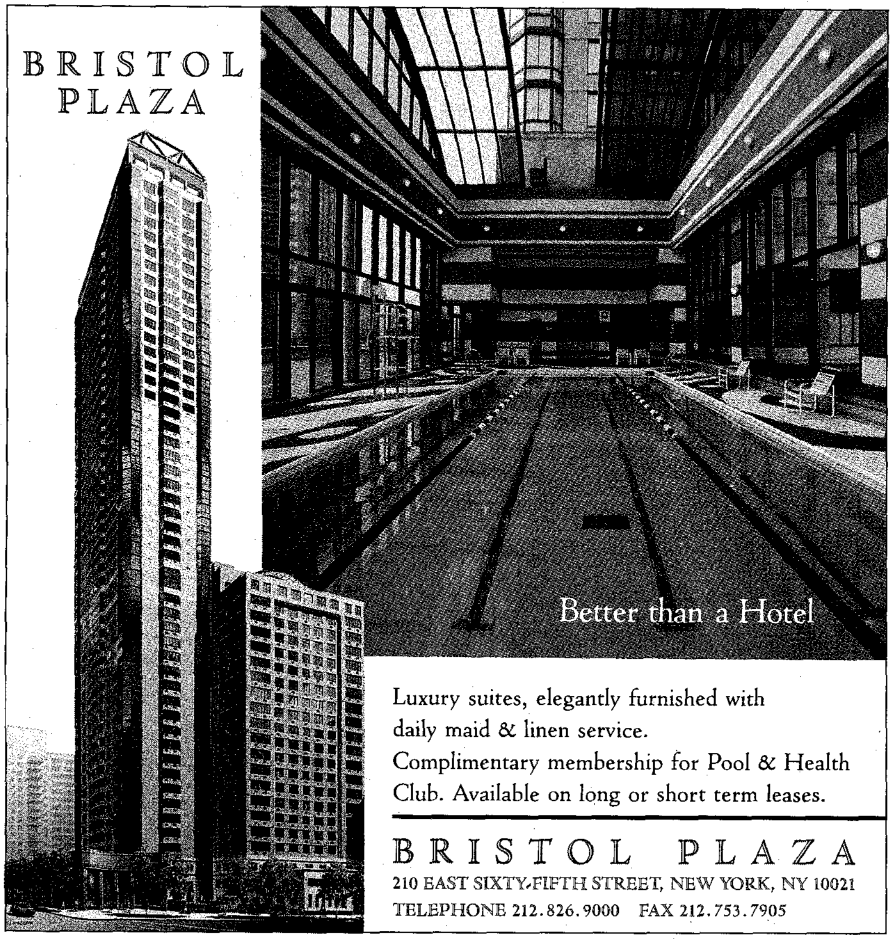

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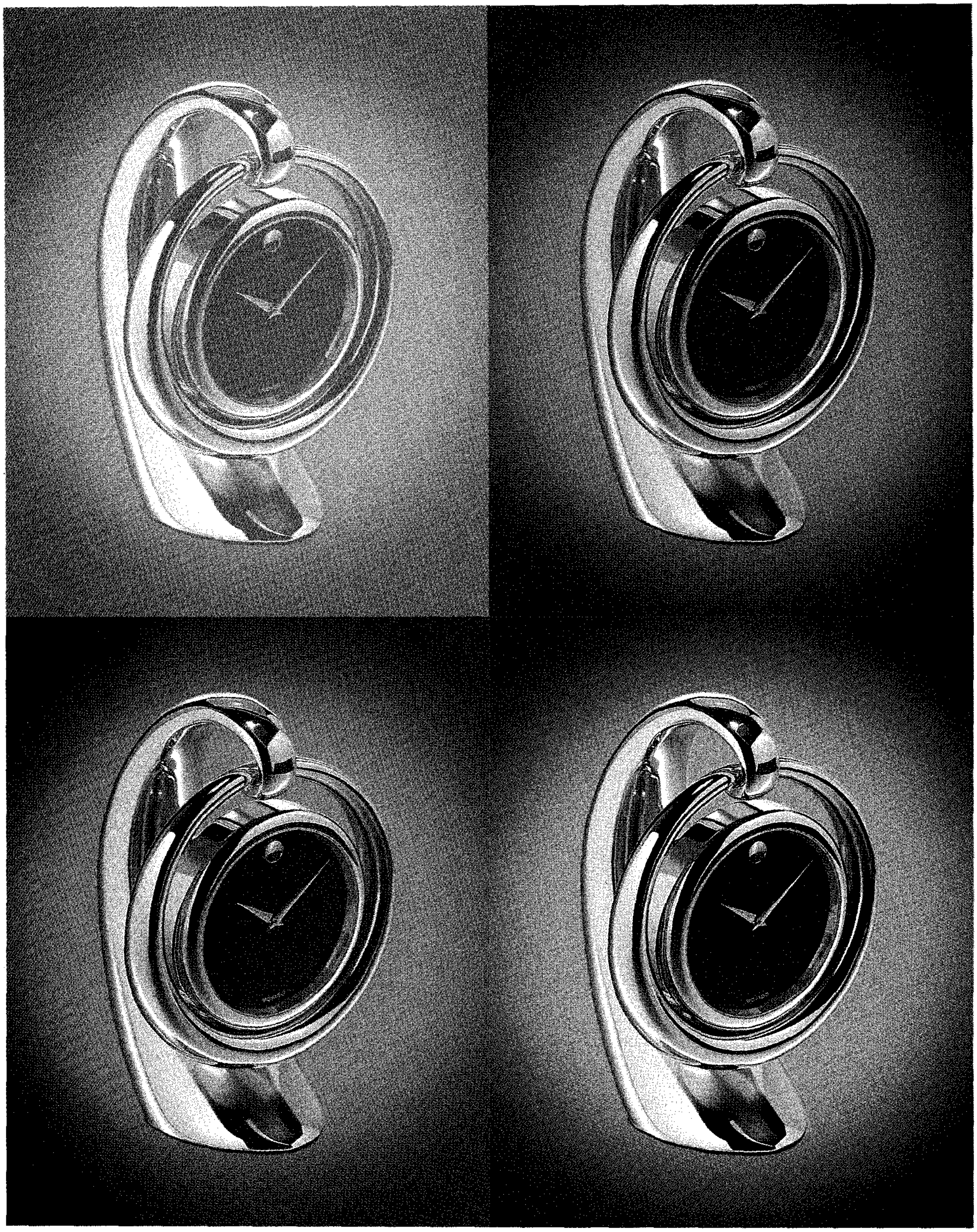

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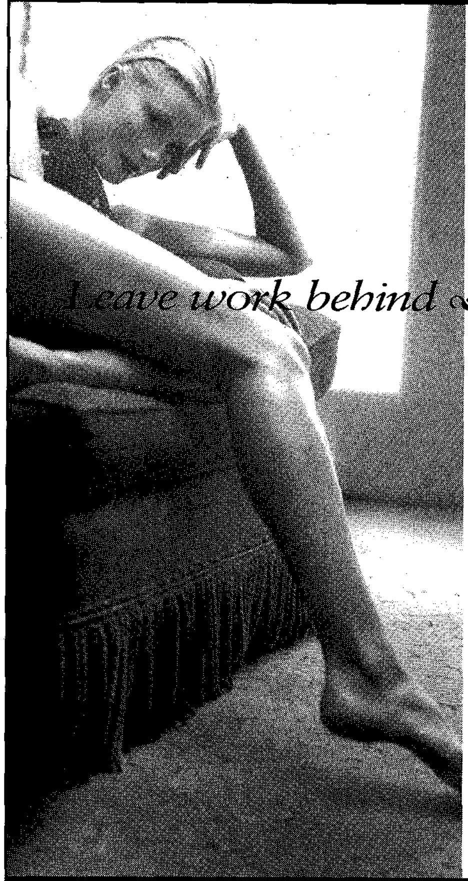

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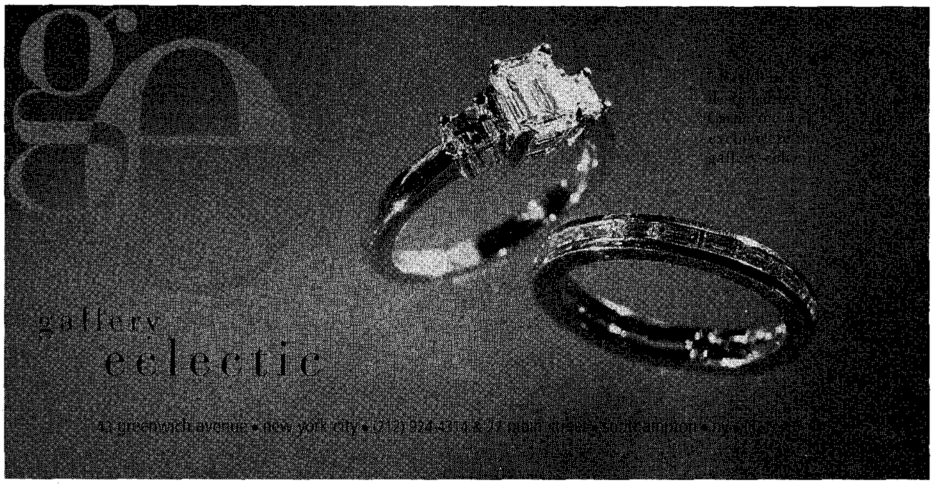
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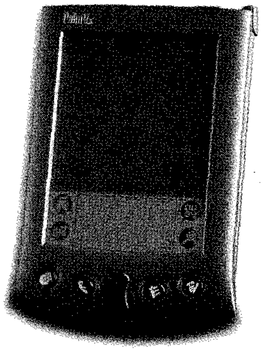

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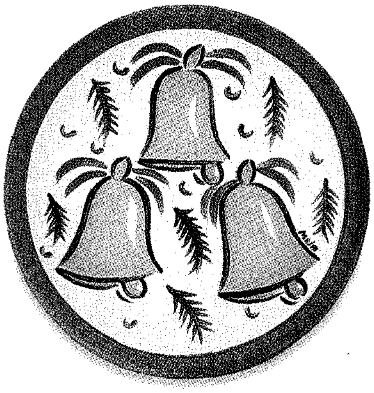

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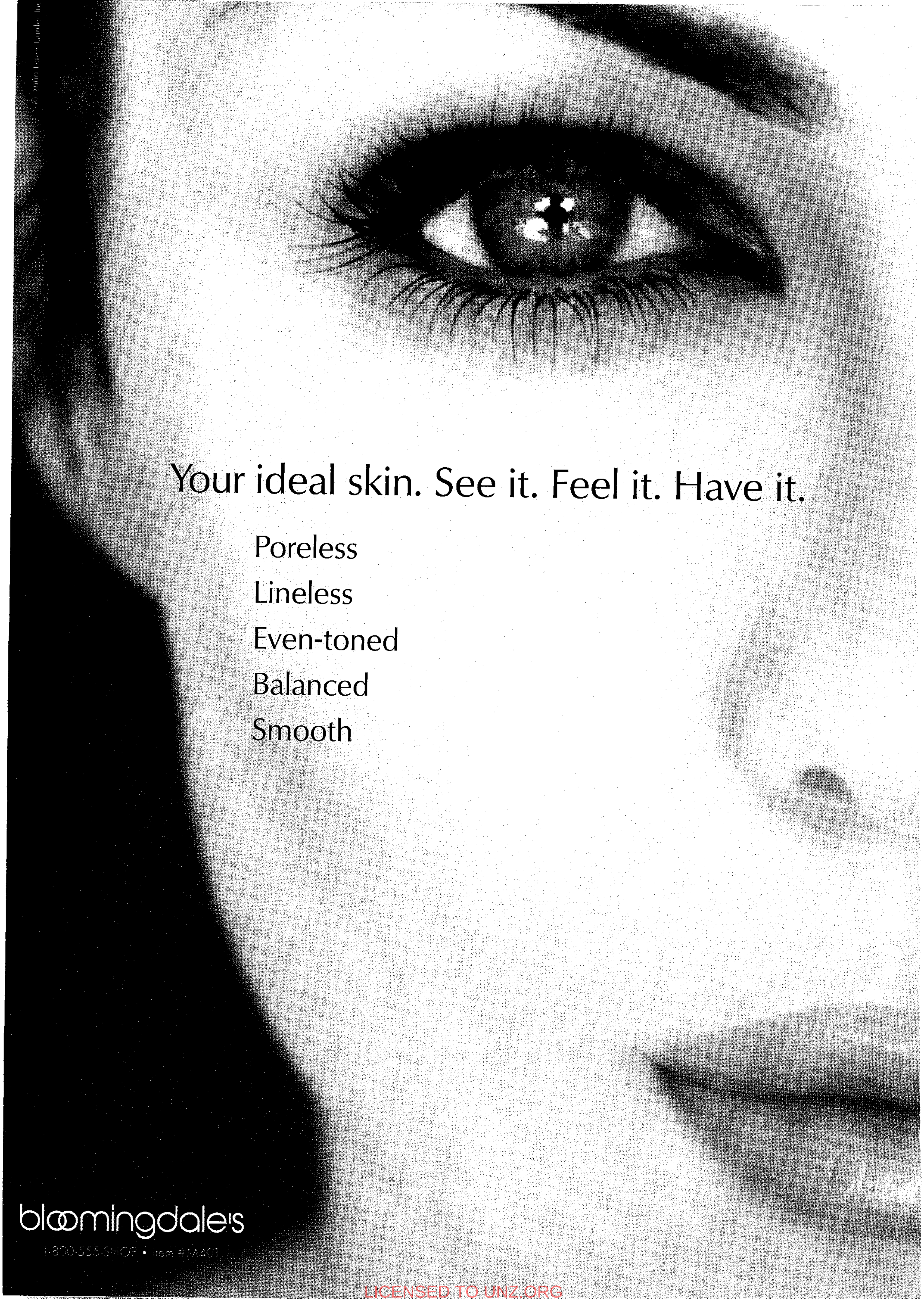
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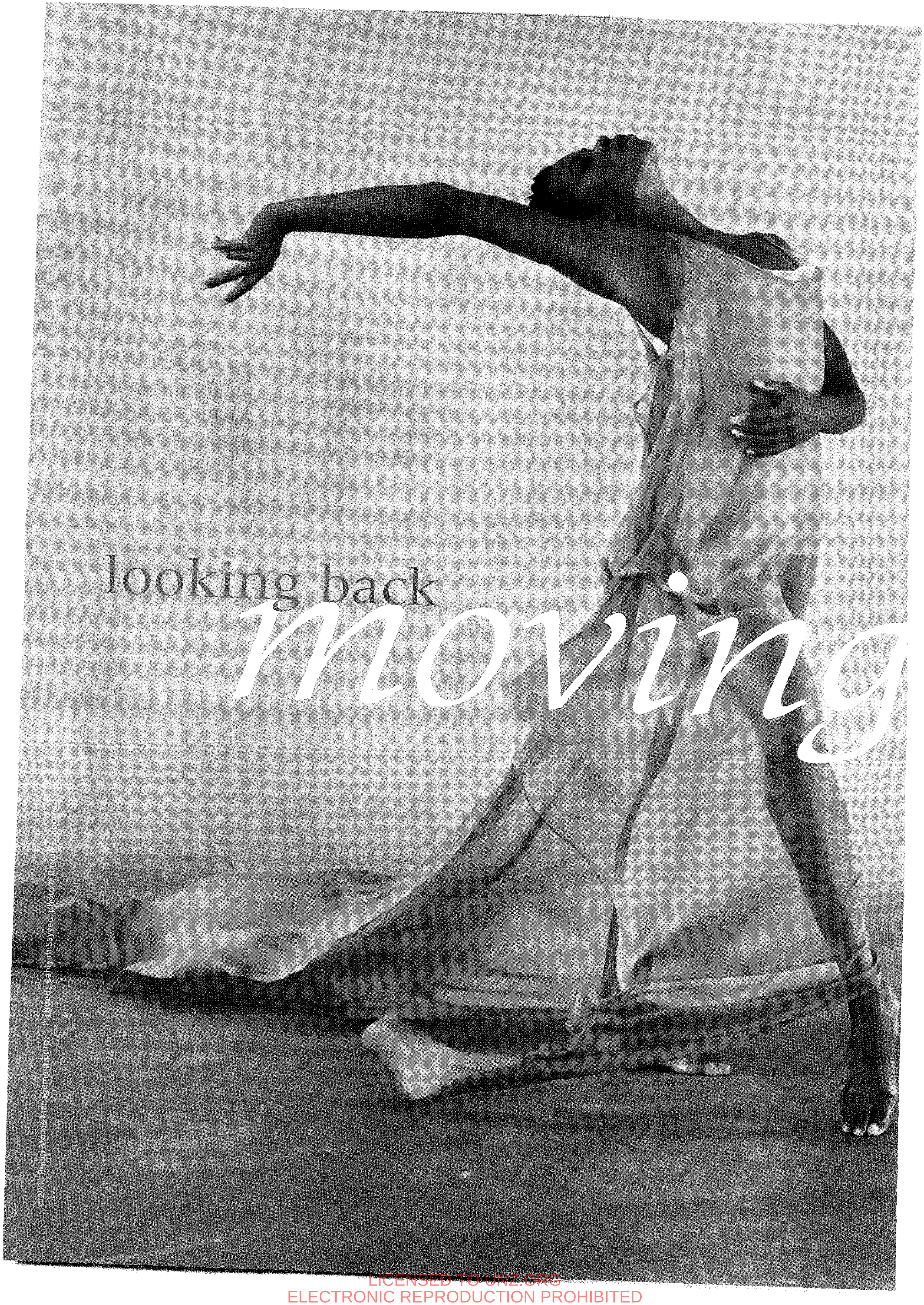
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moving

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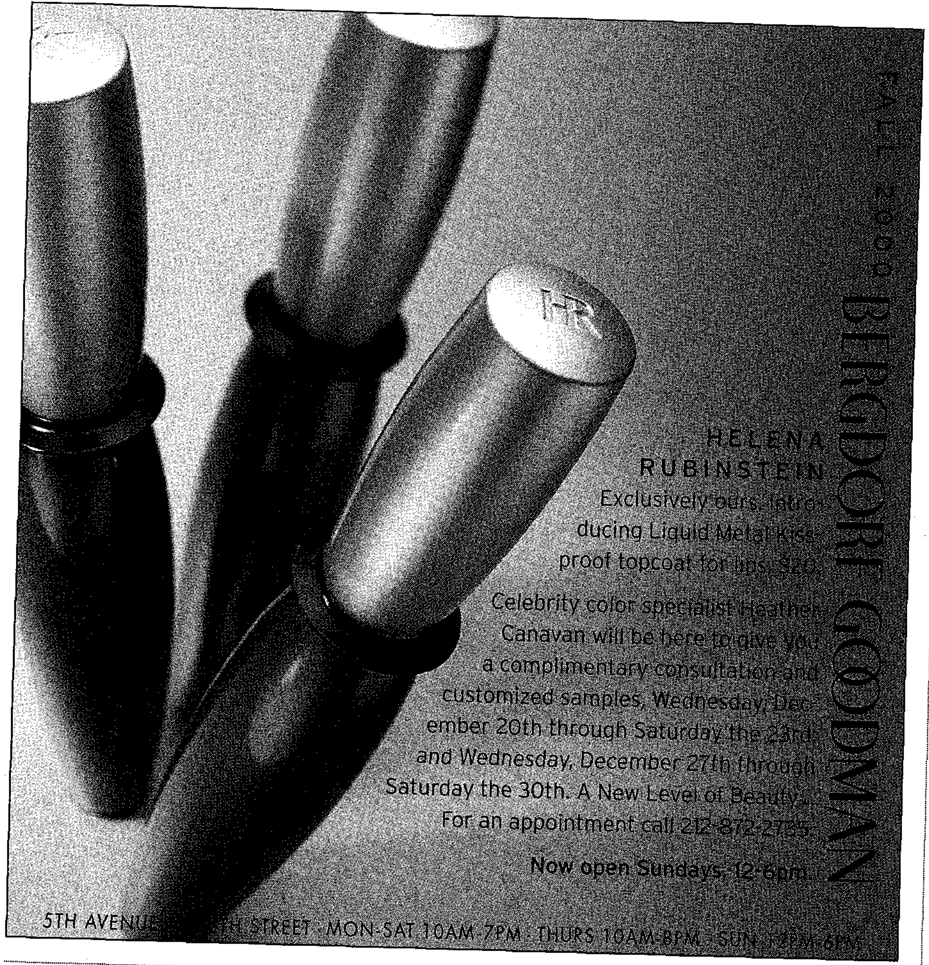
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Letters

> As a child I wanted to
> president; as an adult, I'd much rather play one on TV
> —Tom Maloney

Reality TV

I loved Michael Wolff's article on *T* *West Wing* ["Our Remote-Control Pre ident," December 4]. Reading abo how the Hollywood White House "larger, cleaner, sharper" than the re one and how Josiah Bartlet is the pres dent Americans will look to, regardle of who takes the oath in January, I w reminded of a startling thought I r cently had: Though as a child I wante to grow up to be president, as an adul I'd much rather play one on TV.

Tom Maloney, YONKERS, N.Y.

Model Behavior

I was baffled by "The Model Vanishes by Vanessa Grigoriadis [December 4 The article was exceedingly mean-spir ited. If Lourdes Gruart is alive, I doub she will resurface after your assault i print. If not, I would like to know wha point was served by painting such a unflattering portrait of her, her brothe and her friends and acquaintances.

Stephanie Johnson, STAMFORD, CONN.

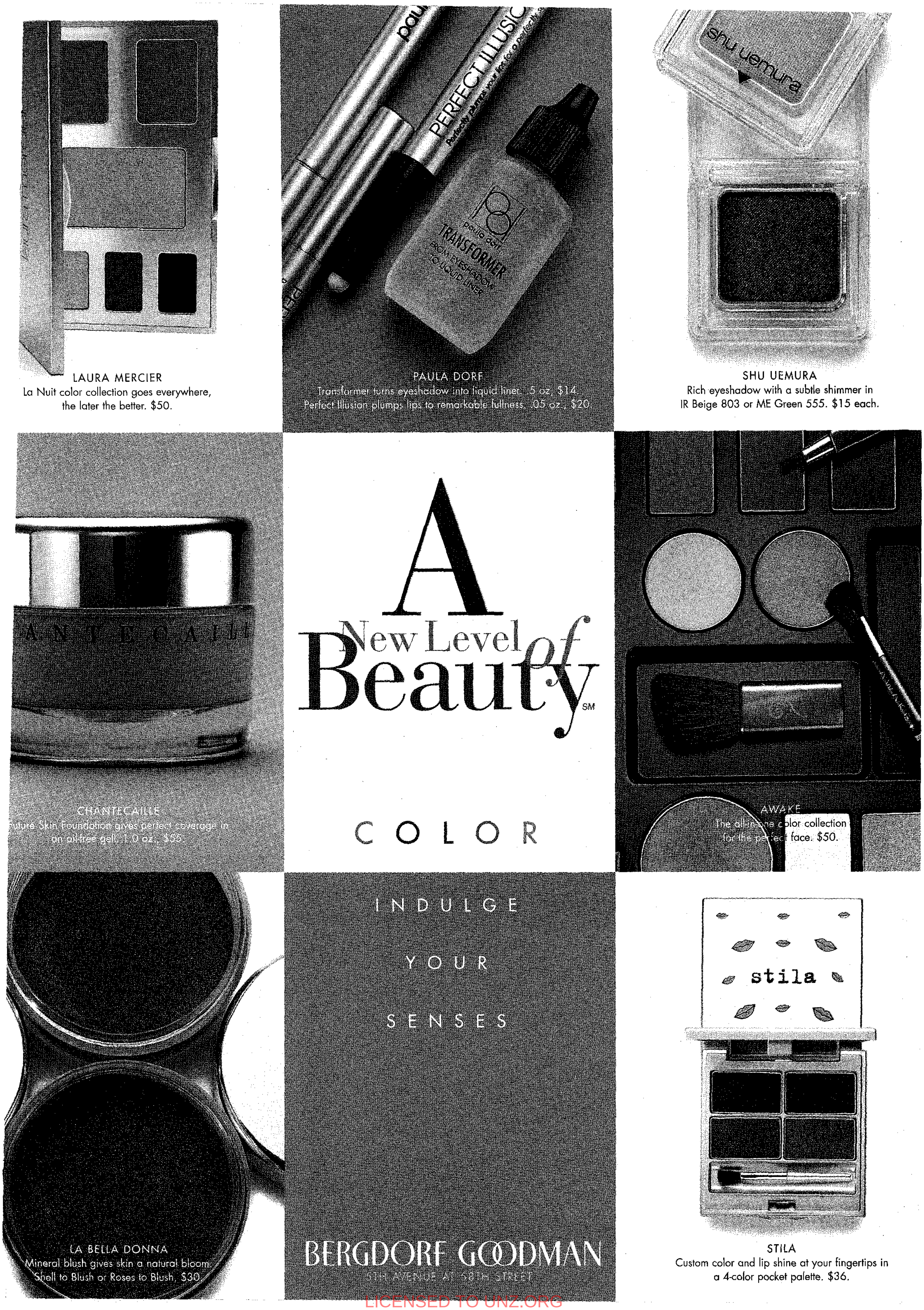
Working Girls

I am writing to you on behalf of mysel and millions of other secretaries in this country. I was quite miffed after reading "Salaries in the City" [November 20]. Those millionaires and billionaires wouldn't be where they are today if not for the wonderful secretaries who work for them. I believe we should be making more money than we are now. And a little recognition wouldn't hurt.

Ruth Feingold, FOREST HILLS

Cote Check

Has John Simon gone off the mother-loving deep end? Making theatergoing plans based on his reviews has always been akin to asking your crazy uncle Abe for hygiene tips, but Simon has outdone himself in his review of *Comic Potential* ["Theater: Future Schlock," November 27]. His obscenely frothy praise of Alan Ayckbourn's amiable but unremarkable comedy is bizarre. To support



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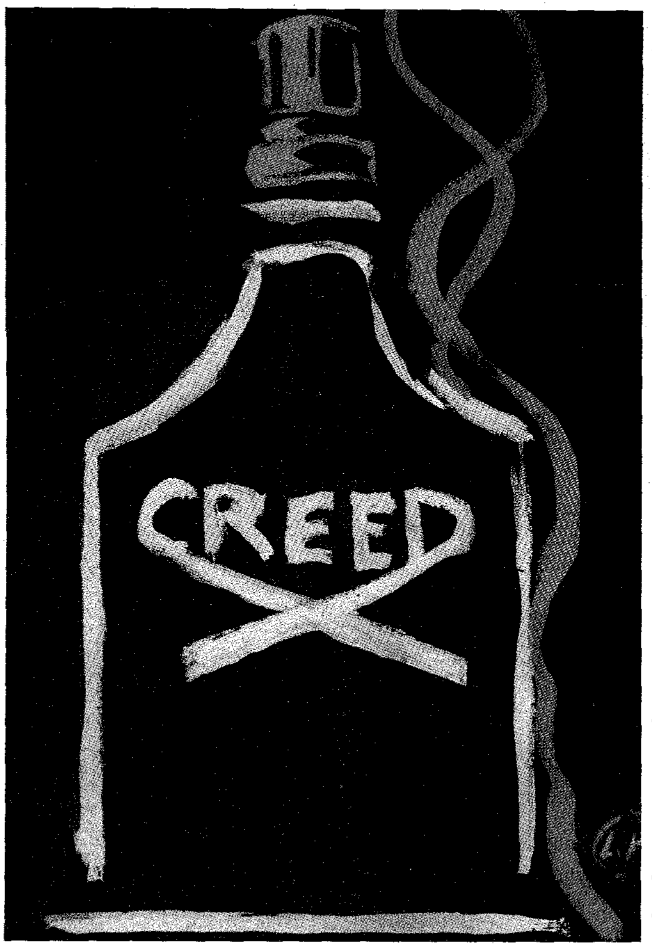

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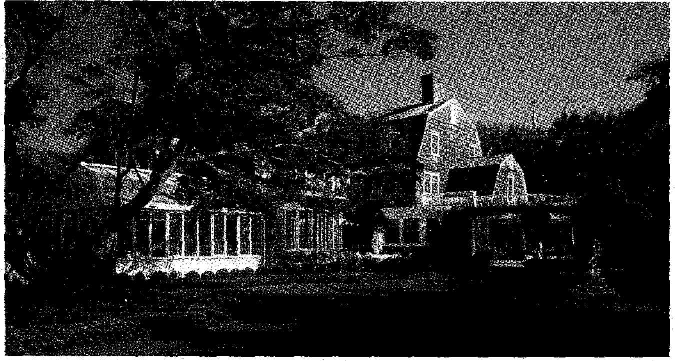

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his overblown assertions, he spray dense thicket of superlatives on the rea er, then bludgeons him with shamel hyperbole. I almost like it better wh he abuses his position to damn a sho

David Cote, MANHATTAN
THEATER WRITER, *TIME OUT NEW YORK*

Poolside Drama

Your description of the swimming pc in the Manhattan Plaza Health Cl comes close to perpetuating a dange ous misconception ["Smart City: Spla Course," by Wickham Boyle, Decemb 4]. Yes, the club is at Manhattan Plaz and yes, Manhattan Plaza is populat with actors; but membership to t health club does not come with a apartment. The government is *not*— conservative politicians often charge "paying for actors' swimming pools."

Richard Helfer, MANHATTAN

Up in Alms

Although a gift to any of the great cha ities listed by Tara Mandy ["The Givin Spree," November 27] could hardly b deemed unworthy of anyone's mite o millions, at least a cursory nod coul have been made to the agencies allie with the one whose name is given to th season of colored lights. Giving to house of worship you pass each day or t the community of believers that mentored you way back when not only personalizes the gift but also brings its ow sense of centering, a sure cure for "anxiety over excesses."

Brother Edward Hofmann, JERSEY CITY, N.J.

CORRECTION: In "Artful Dodgers" ("Gotham," by Christopher Mason, October 23), we reported that Dede Brooks, Sotheby's former CEO, shifted her assets by purchasing a home in Florida, where the law protects personal residences from being seized in bankruptcy proceedings. In fact, that home was purchased by her husband. In "The Giving Spree" (November 27), the phone number for the New York Public Library was incorrect; it is 212-930-0670.

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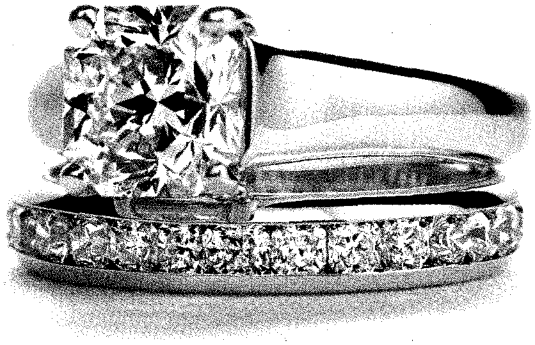

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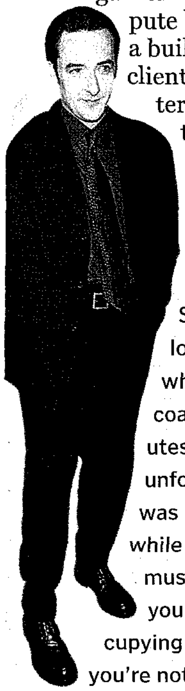
Intelligencer

Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman

ontract Hit on the oss School

e folks at the Ross School e about to get a lesson in igation. The ultra-exclu- e East Hampton private hool founded by **Courtney le Ross** is being sued by e contractors hired to exe- ite the school's controver- al large-scale expansion. elemark Construction, hich was brought on to omplete the school's mas- ve 48-building addition, as filed a lawsuit for "sever- millions," according to the ompany's lawyer **Fred ohen**. Cohen declines to iscuss the details of the ase before it has been re- olved, but insists that the ob Telemark was hired to o was in fact completed, eautifully," adding, "You hould go see it." A Ross chool spokesman plays own the case, saying, "It's a garden-variety dispute between a builder and a client. The matter is in litigation." This is not the first high-profile payment squabble that Telemark has been involved in. In 1994, legendary *60 Minutes* executive producer **Don Hewitt** hired Telemark to renovate his Hamptons home, only to fire the construction company on the grounds that the workmanship was shoddy. Telemark then sued Hewitt after he withheld final payment, and Hewitt filed a $1 million countersuit. As far as those previous suits go, all involved declined to comment aside from saying the case had been resolved.

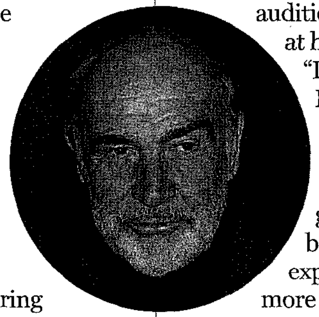


New Yorker's Weird Welcome to the Net

If a venerable institution like *The New Yorker* wants to burst onto the Internet, it had better be ready for computer-age high jinks. As soon as the gang at modernhumorist.com heard that the old-school magazine intended to launch a Website, they bought up the domain name Newyorkermag.com—and promptly transformed it into a special *New Yorker* "preview." The spoof site—which launches this week—promises fiction by **Nicholson Baker** titled "**Britney Spears** Nude XXX Pics *Free*" as well as "**Nick Hornby** on the classic pop purity of midi files." **Art Spiegelman** fans might be interested in a series of "Doodie Flash animations," listed on the page, including "Maus Droppings" and "The Wild Farty." Newyorkermag.com also offers a software program that "scans newspapers from two weeks ago and generates stilted but basically readable 700-word satires . . . the next best thing to **Christopher Buckley**!" While *The New Yorker*'s real site, Newyorker.com, has yet to launch, *Modern Humorist* senior editor **Daniel Radosh** muses, "*The New Yorker* is wonderful and the Web is wonderful, but it's hard to see what either would gain from combining." We'd have asked the magazine what it thinks of all this, but we didn't want to spoil the surprise.

New Kid Stands Up to 007

Every once in a while a teen star comes along who went into acting for the right reason: not fame or fortune but cellular service. Brooklynite **Rob Brown**, the 16-year-old leading man of **Gus Van Sant**'s *Finding Forrester*, co-starring **Sean Connery** and **Anna Paquin**, tells us he'd never had so much as an acting lesson when Van Sant cast him. "I needed a bit of extra cash to pay my cell-phone bill," says Brown, explaining why he showed up at an open-audition call posted at his high school. "I thought maybe I'd be cast as an extra." Van Sant, who cast Brown as a genius basketball player, expressed a touch more enthusiasm. "As soon as he read, we felt it at once," the director tells us. "So we asked him to come back the next day and read with Sean Connery. We were astonished to see that Rob could stand up to him, even match him." Connery also gushed: "Rob was a real pro. He's a very intelligent kid with very, very good instincts." The film opens December 19.



John Cusack Out; Breaking Stuff In

At the newly reopened Studio 54, when the boss is away all hell breaks loose. Since owner **Noel Ashman** traveled to Las Vegas for pitcher **David Wells**'s bachelor party recently, many of his key staffers decided to take that Saturday night off, which made for quite an evening. First, **John Cusack** in baseball cap and trench coat went unrecognized by the replacement doorman and was barred for fifteen minutes. Also taking a powder that night was Ashman's sound technician, which proved unfortunate when D.J. **Mark Ronson**'s turntable broke. The Ronson clan's No. 1 son was only able to play CDs, thereby depriving the crowd of his usual mix stylings. And while such celebs as **James King**, **Jesse Martin**, and **Angie Harmon** coolly enjoyed the music, others in attendance broke three banquettes by dancing on them—and one young lady broke her ankle. A fourth banquette was cleared out when the couple occupying it were removed from the nightclub for getting too much of a groove on. What, you're not supposed to do *that* anymore?

Darker Days for Michael Alig

The tale of murderous club kid **Michael Alig** keeps getting seedier. After nearly three years without incident in prison, Alig was recently

Photographs: from top, Robin Platzer/Twin Images;Fitzroy Barrett/Globe Photos

busted twice for drugs. According to a spokeswoman for the New York State Department of Correctional Services, Alig was found guilty of possession and smuggling drugs in the Clinton Correctional Facility back in July, which resulted in his losing three months of good-behavior time and being sentenced to 360 days in the special-housing unit, where he was confined to his cell 23 hours a day. Despite his isolation, the Corrections rep says Alig used drugs in September. With the second bust, Alig lost another three months' good behavior and was transferred to the Southport facility, where, according to the spokeswoman, "we tend to send the long-term disciplinary guys." Alig has been stripped of such privileges as eating in the cafeteria and receiving packages. "Word on the club circuit is that Michael thinks he was the victim of entrapment," says Alig's former employee, nightlife promoter **Baird Jones**. Alig believes he's been set up, says Jones, "but he knows there's no way he can ever prove it."

Mag Stressed Over *Spin* Control

SPIN
THE YEAR IN MUSIC
EMINEM
RADIOHEAD
THE YEAR'S BEST ALBUMS AND SINGLES
STRESS
OR JUST SOME SICK RETARD?

That recent *Spin* magazine cover with **Eminem** done up like **Malcolm McDowell** in *A Clockwork Orange* is pretty cool—but it would have been even cooler if *Spin* had actually created it. The idea came from hip-hop publisher **Alain Maridueña**, whose magazine *Stress* used the exact same photo on its cover more than two years ago. "It was our concept," says Maridueña. "It was our photo shoot." *Spin* editor-in-chief **Alan Light** says he used the old shot for the feature—which names Eminem Artist of the Year—because of the rapper's sudden and uncharacteristic bout of press shyness. "He wouldn't do a photo shoot," Light told us, "so we tried to pull the best, strongest image we could find, and this was it." Light gave props to the smaller mag, saying, "I'll give *Stress* the credit for a good shoot. Eminem was willing to play around a little more back then." Maridueña, however, wasn't feeling the love: "Stuff like this happens to us all the time. I'm used to us being the farm team of ideas for that magazine."

Ian Ziering: How to Make It in Hollywood

There comes a time in every actor's life when he must become actor-director-producer. Thus, the latest gambit by former *Beverly Hills 90210* star **Ian Ziering**. "I've got a project that I've optioned that I've been shopping around," he told us recently at the fashion industry's Michael Awards. While Ziering said he'd rather not say what the story was, he did favor us with a description: "It's a risqué kind of comedy—definitely cable in nature." Ziering said that he's had "a lot of great meetings" but that, so far, no one's committed. The heartthrob's old boss **Aaron Spelling** liked the project, Ziering said, but had to take a pass. "Let's just say the subject matter was not right for his company," Ziering explained. "We're trying to find the right synergy now. Cross-pollination is hard to come by." We *so* know what you mean.

Kempner Explains Anti-Fat Folk Line

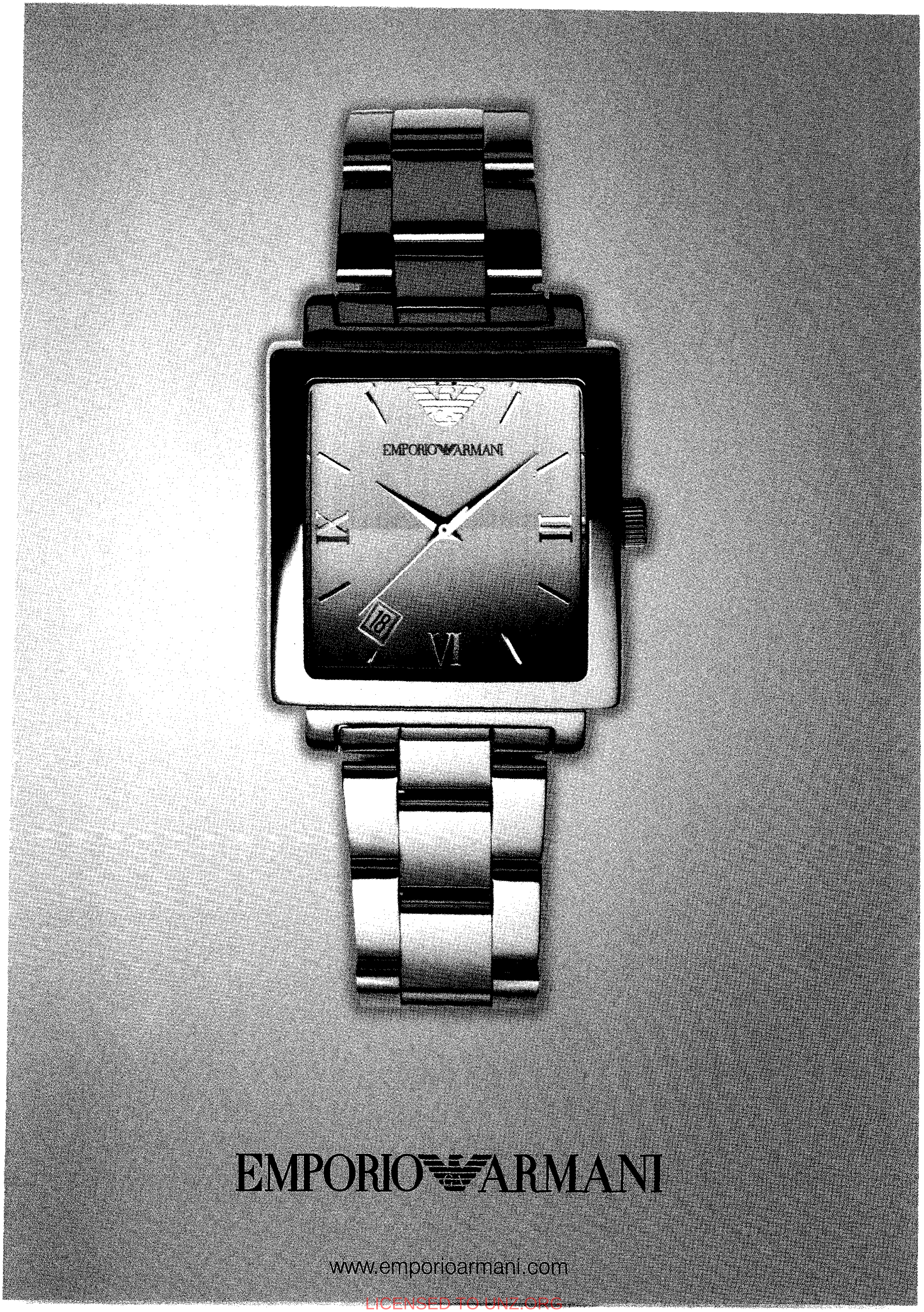
If **Nan Kempner** has a distaste for the bulging masses, she has her reasons. The pencil-shaped socialite caught no end of grief in the letters section of the December issue of V in response to her being quoted in the magazine saying, "I loathe fat people But Kempner explained herself to a friend at a luncheon hosted by **Michael Kors** at the Ace Gallery last week. According to a witness, Kempner told friends that her staunch anti-cellulite stance stems from a weight problem she herself suffered as a child. "She said, ‘ was fat as a kid, and it's always affected me,' " the source relates. Kempner then assured her pal, "I don't hate *anybody*." When we called Kempner, she confirmed the tale to us, adding that she regrets the quote—taken from an article about her new cookbook, *RSVP*, proceeds of which are going to benefit cancer research—got so much attention. "I'm a marshmallow," she said. "I've been in tears for weeks. Sometimes things that sound funny when you say them don't read funny."

Strange On-Set Traffic Patterns

Filming the drug-war epic *Traffic* proved to be as paranoia-inducing as the narcotics trade itself. Cast member **Yul Vazquez** tells us one of the most frightening moments came when he and fellow Hispanic actor **Clifton Collins** were stopped by U.S. border agents while crossing back into Arizona after a day of filming in Mexico. "They asked [Collins] where he was born and he just froze," says Vazquez. "He couldn't remember. I said, 'Dude! Don't hesitate!' It was kind of terrifying." For inspiring a real freak-out, though, the authorities were no match for **Benicio Del Toro**, who constantly carried a mysterious black case. "Everyone was dying to know what was in it," Vazquez relates. "But he would never tell us. Every single day we'd say, 'Hey, Benny, what's in the box?' and he'd say, 'Stuff.' He loved it." Vazquez—whose fellow cast mates include newlyweds **Michael Douglas** and **Catherine Zeta-Jones**—provided a pretty surreal moment for himself when he got to fire a sniper rifle from California governor **Gray Davis**'s San Diego office: "They had to send out memos to workers in the area saying DO NOT BE ALARMED," says Vazquez. "Even though you know you're firing blanks, when you're looking through the sight the power you feel is really crazy." Didn't **Charlton Heston** say that first?

Additional reporting by Paige Herman and Abbey Goodman.

Photograph: bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images.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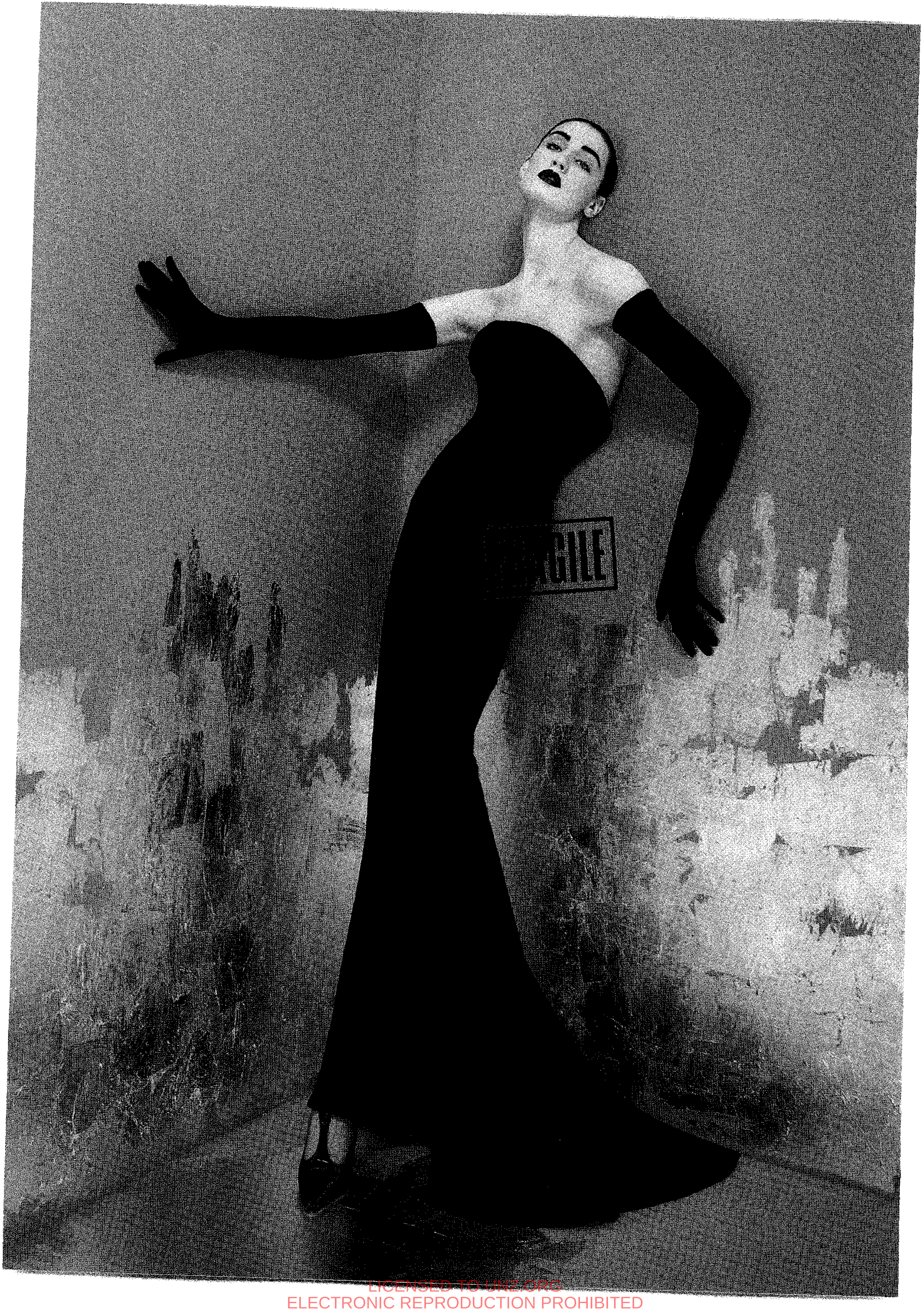

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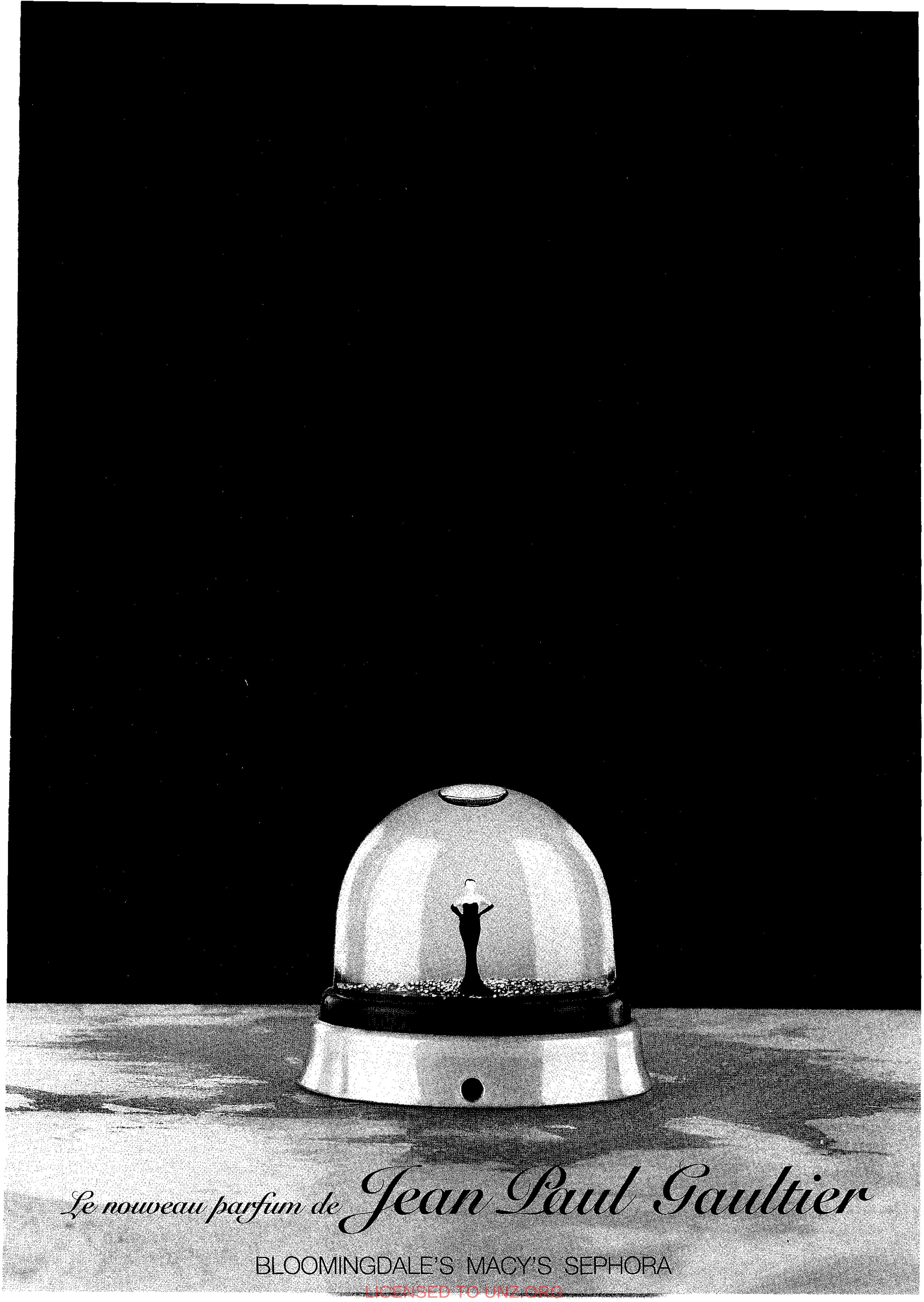
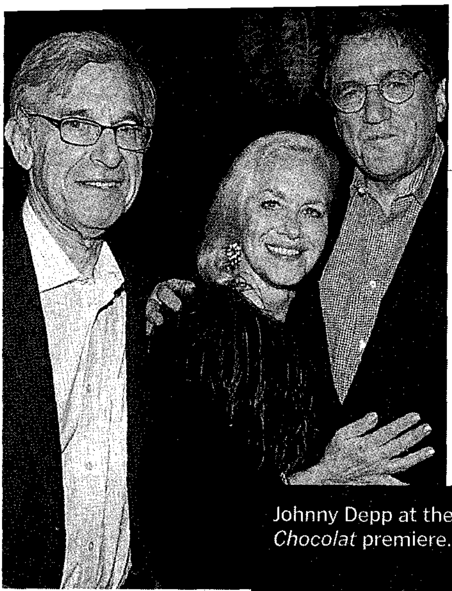


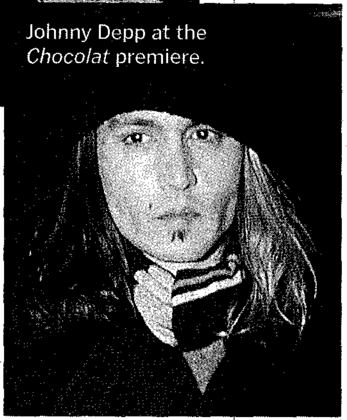
Le nouveau parfum de Jean Paul Gaultier

BLOOMINGDALE'S MACY'S SEPHORA

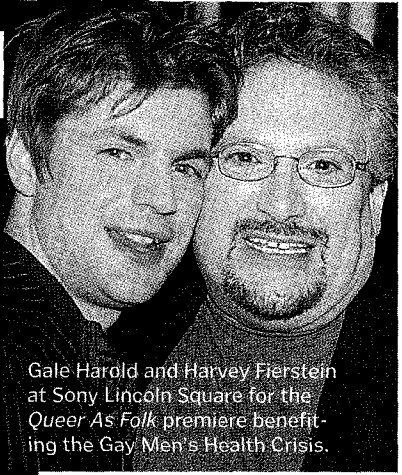
Scene


Alan Patricoff, Linda Janklow, and Richard Holbrooke at Obeca Li to celebrate Mort and Linda Janklow's 40th anniversary.

Debbie Harry, Lisa Robinson, and Jewel at the Diane von Furstenberg Studio to celebrate the publication of *Vanity Fair's Hollywood*.


Johnny Depp at the *Chocolat* premiere.

Michael Jackson at the Marriott Marquis for the Angel Ball to benefit Cancer Research.

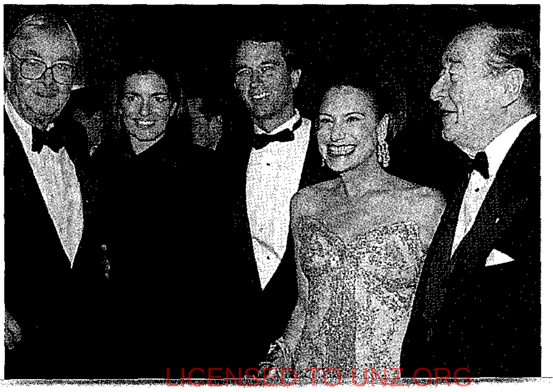

Gale Harold and Harvey Fierstein at Sony Lincoln Square for the *Queer As Folk* premiere benefiting the Gay Men's Health Crisis.

Richard Parsons and Judy McGrath at the New York City Ballet opening-night gala.

Geraldine Smith, Cindy Adams, and Sylvia Miles at the Beekman Theatre for the *Cast Away* premiere.

Marvin Hamlisch and Queen Noor at Cipriani 42nd Street for the "India Under the Stars" party for United World Colleges.

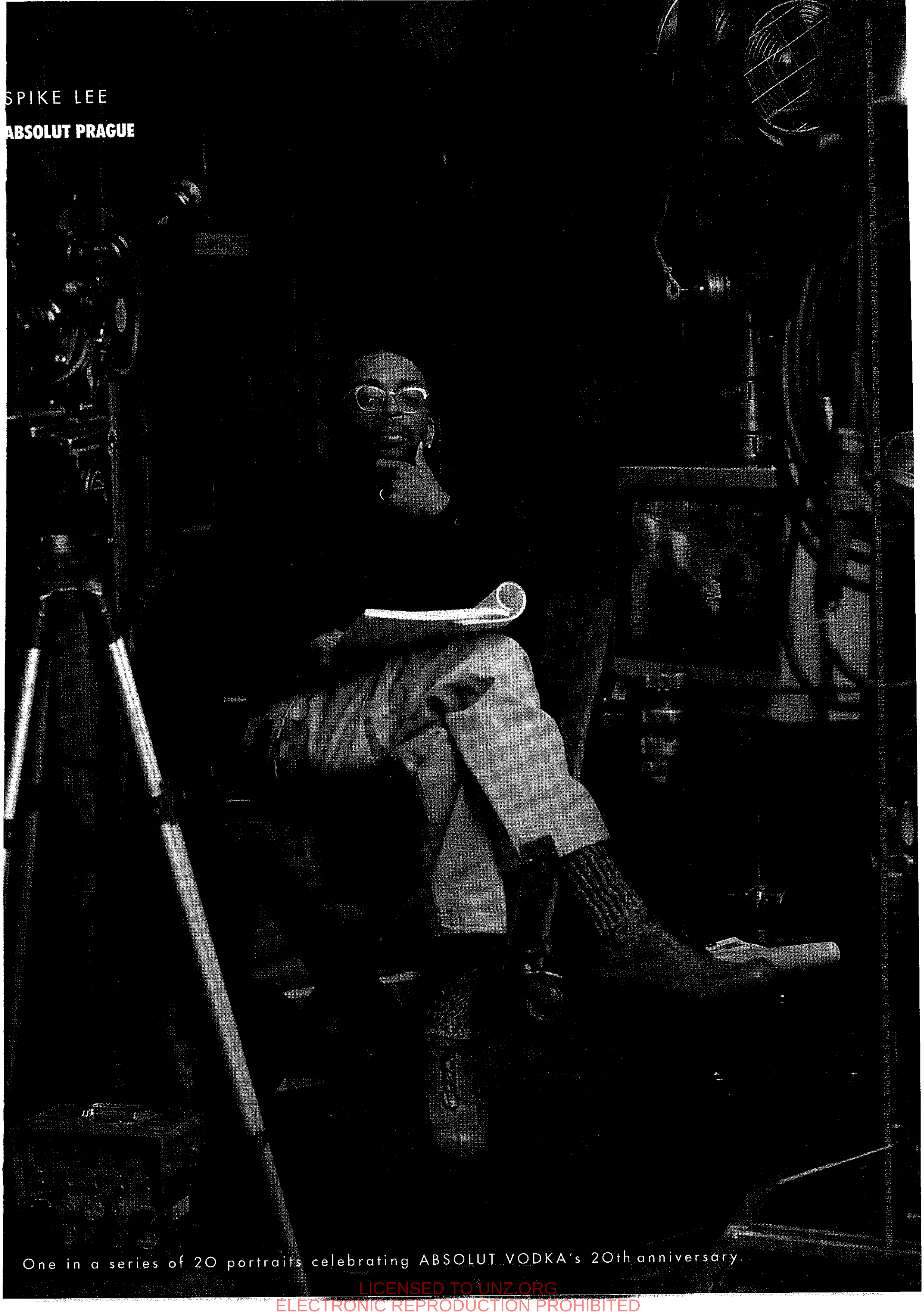
Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Mary and Robert Kennedy Jr., Sharyn Mann, and Sirio Maccioni at the Plaza Hotel for the Food Allergy Initiative's annual gala.



Dessert Island

Starlets, gadflies, and Tinseltown tans—with seemingly two flacks apie in attendance—gathered at the Pla Hotel on December 4 to celebrate t premiere of *Chocolat,* a film that exa ines the aphrodisiacal pro erties of the sweet substanc Those guests able to get pa the publicists' iron curtai (for a moment, it looked as **Tina Brown** and **Harold Eva** might not make it into th party) became privy t celebrity musings about th treat: "Chocolate is so wo derful," proclaimed the film star, **Juliette Binoche.** "*Ever body* should eat it!" **Harve Weinstein** agreed. "I've al ways seen that food and pas sion are synony mous," explained th ponderous produce who praised the par ticularly passionat mood on the *Chocola* set: "Everybody go into the chocolate Though I'm probabl the only one who pu on weight." (Weinstein's tablemate, **Johnny Depp**, the movie's other lead, listened as he savored a guilty pleasure of a different sort: hand-rolled cigarettes.) **Peter Gallagher** adopted a contrarian stance: "For me, it's all about the *unerotic* possibilities of chocolate. When there's no opportunity for anything erotic, a handful of Hershey's Kisses is the next best thing!" But **Alfred Molina**, breaking away from a chat with the director **Lasse Hallström**, took a firmly pro-chocolate position: "Look," he exclaimed, "I'm living testament to the great erotic possibilities of chocolate." Excuse us? "My parents *conceived* me after a wonderful meal—and I'd suspect yours did, too!" DAVID AMSDEN

Photographs by
Patrick McMullan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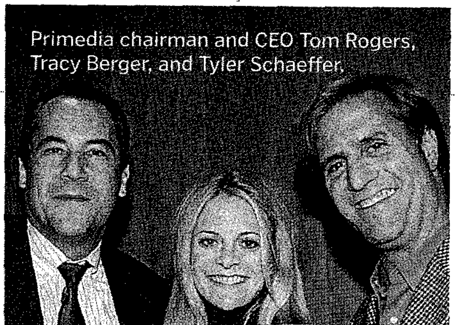
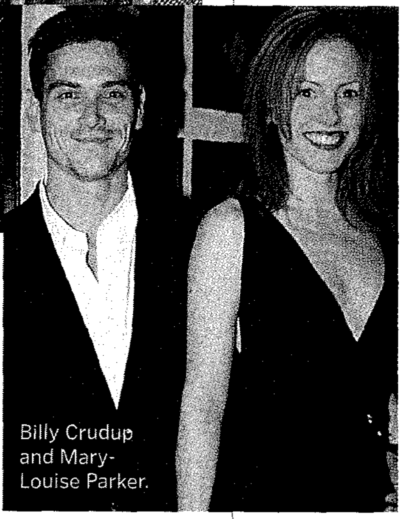
Scene


Primedia chairman and CEO Tom Rogers, Tracy Berger, and Tyler Schaeffer.

Monica Lewinsky, Regis Philbin, Barbara Walters, *New York* editor-in-chief Caroline Miller, and *New York* publisher Alan Katz.


Billy Crudup and Mary-Louise Parker.

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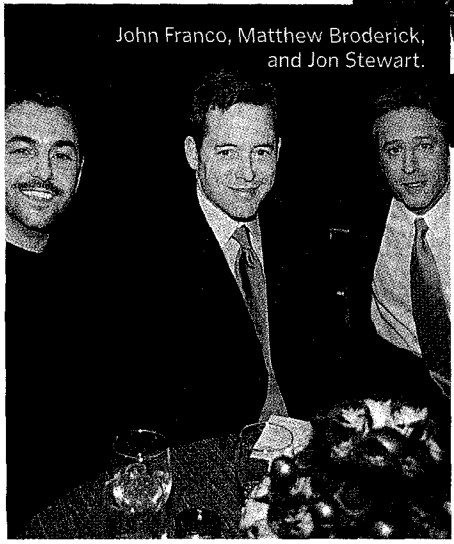
Carson Daly and Mos Def.

Joan Jett.

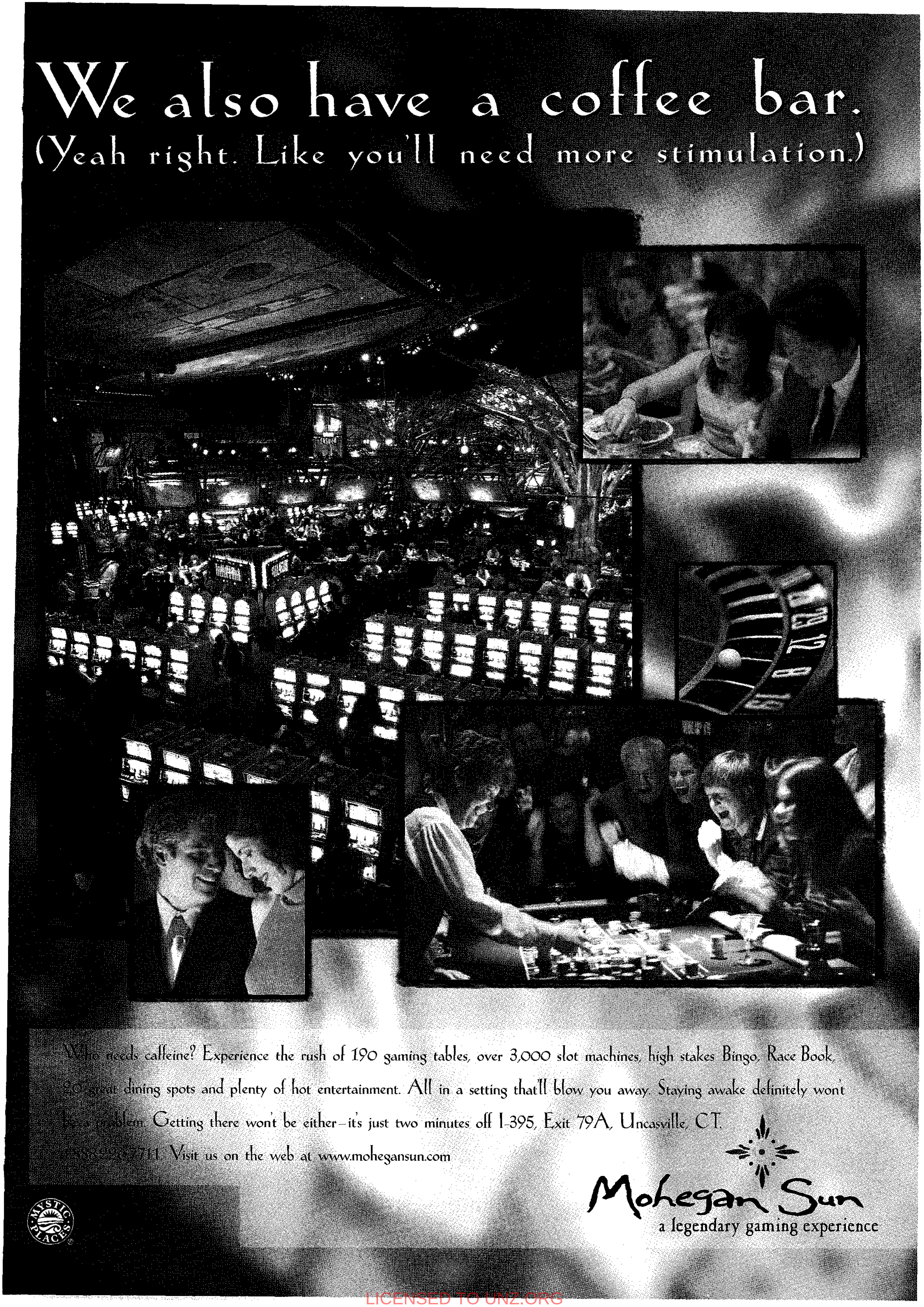

John Franco, Matthew Broderick, and Jon Stewart.

Darien, Damon, and Stacey Dash.

New York Awards

Each of the honorees—and the perform ers—at the December 4 taping of th year's *New York* Award made the scene at NBC *Saturday Night Live* stu dio with his or her ver own, very proud cheerin squad. **Lou Reed** had **Lau rie Anderson** in tow. **Bill Crudup** clutched **Mary Louise Parker**'s hand afte she claimed hers, and **Jim my Fallon** thanked his en tire family as the camer panned to his beamin dad, sister, and mom. " was shouting, 'Yeah, Jim my!' But he didn't nee the extra help!" said **Jan Pratt**, who's been a frien of the family ever since sh learned that as a teenager Jimmy had his own Jane Prat tribute band. Meanwhile, **A D'Amato** looked ready to star a tribute band of his own as he and **Ed Koch** chatted up the really very enraptured Misses (USA and Universe, that is) while **Jon Stewart** talked politics with **Matthew Broderick** a few tables away. Co-hosts **John Leguizamo** (who kept a cell phone strapped to his belt all night—his girlfriend was going into labor) and **Kim Cattrall** gave up the stage to **Joan Jett** and the rest of the *Rocky Horror Show* cast for a performance of "Time Warp" that took them right into the audience. **Monica Lewinsky** managed to shrug off Leguizamo's barbs, but she did look a little rattled at being drawn into the Broadway action. Public drama, after all, is no longer her thing. She was far happier, during the photo ops, to be standing right beside **Barbara Walters** and Lifetime Achievement Award winner **Regis Philbin**. AMY LAROCCA

Photographs by Patrick McMullan



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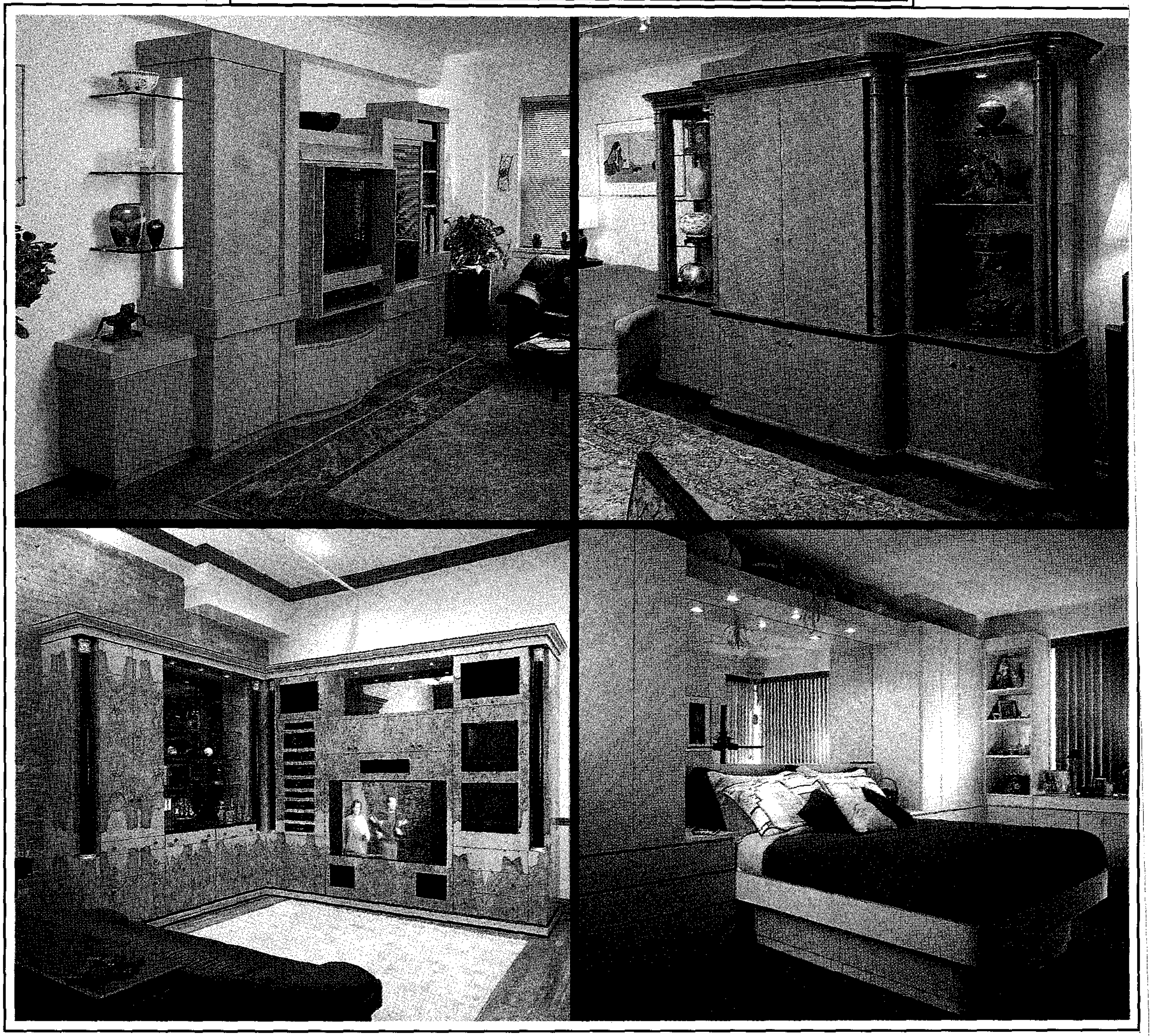

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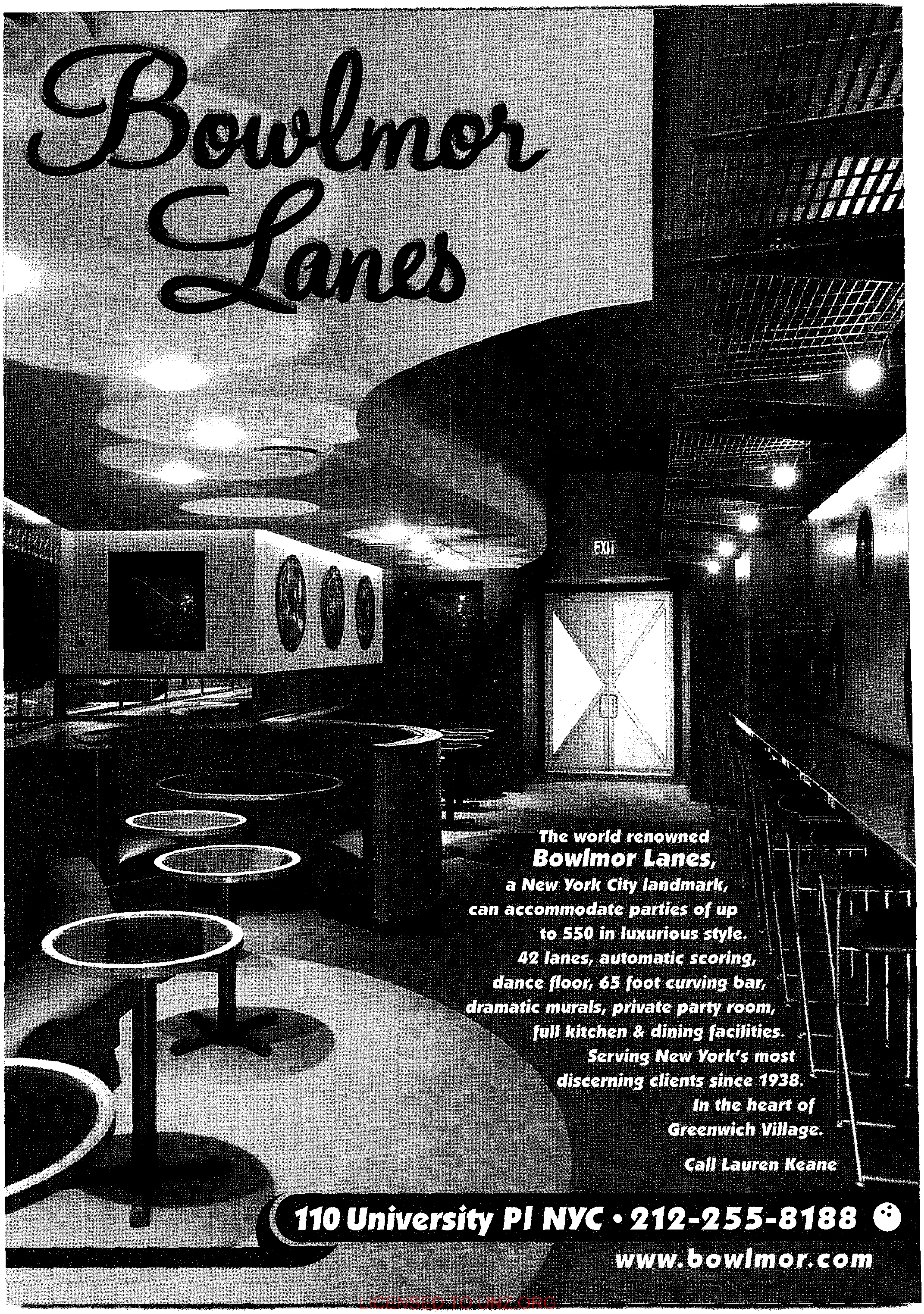

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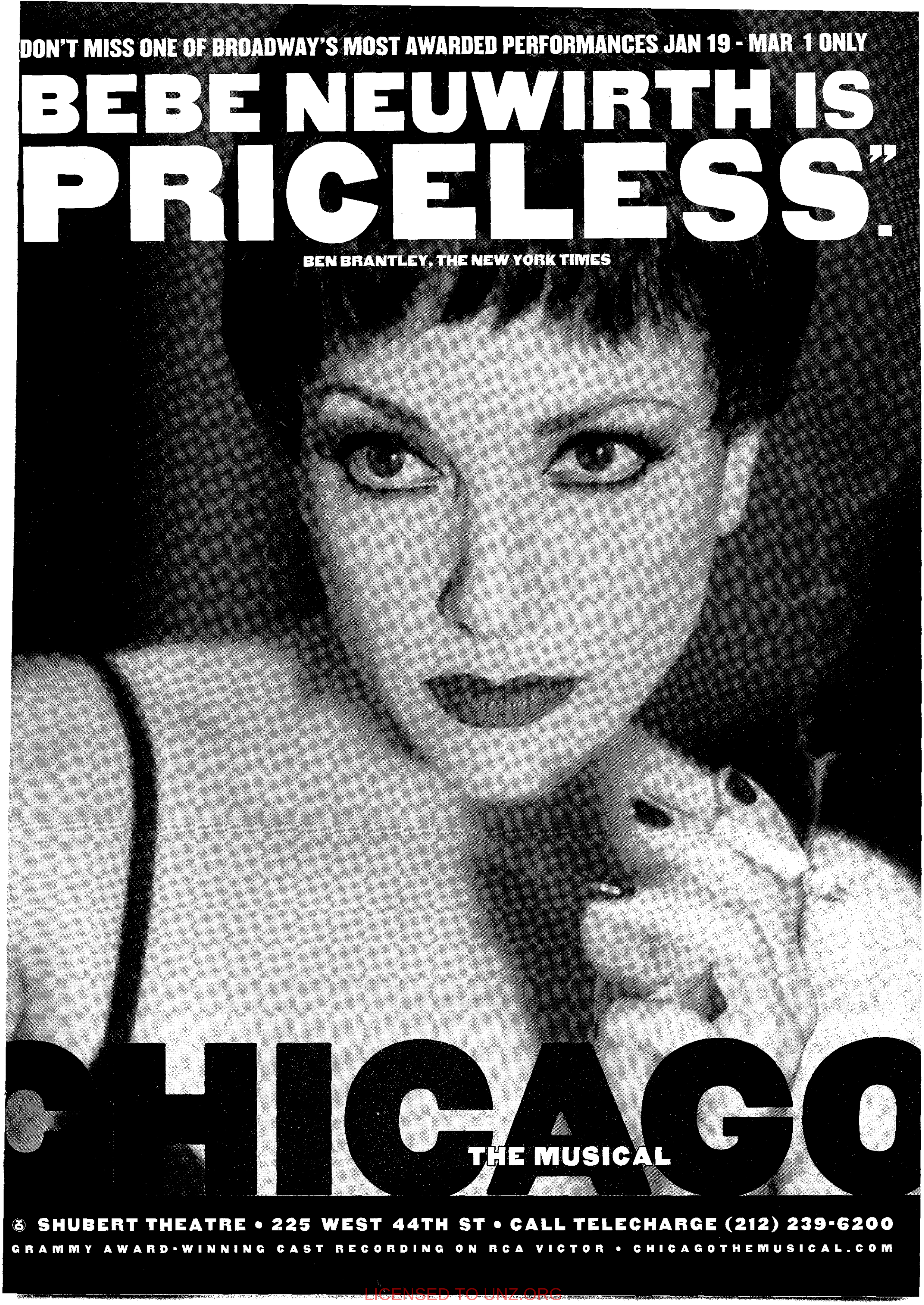
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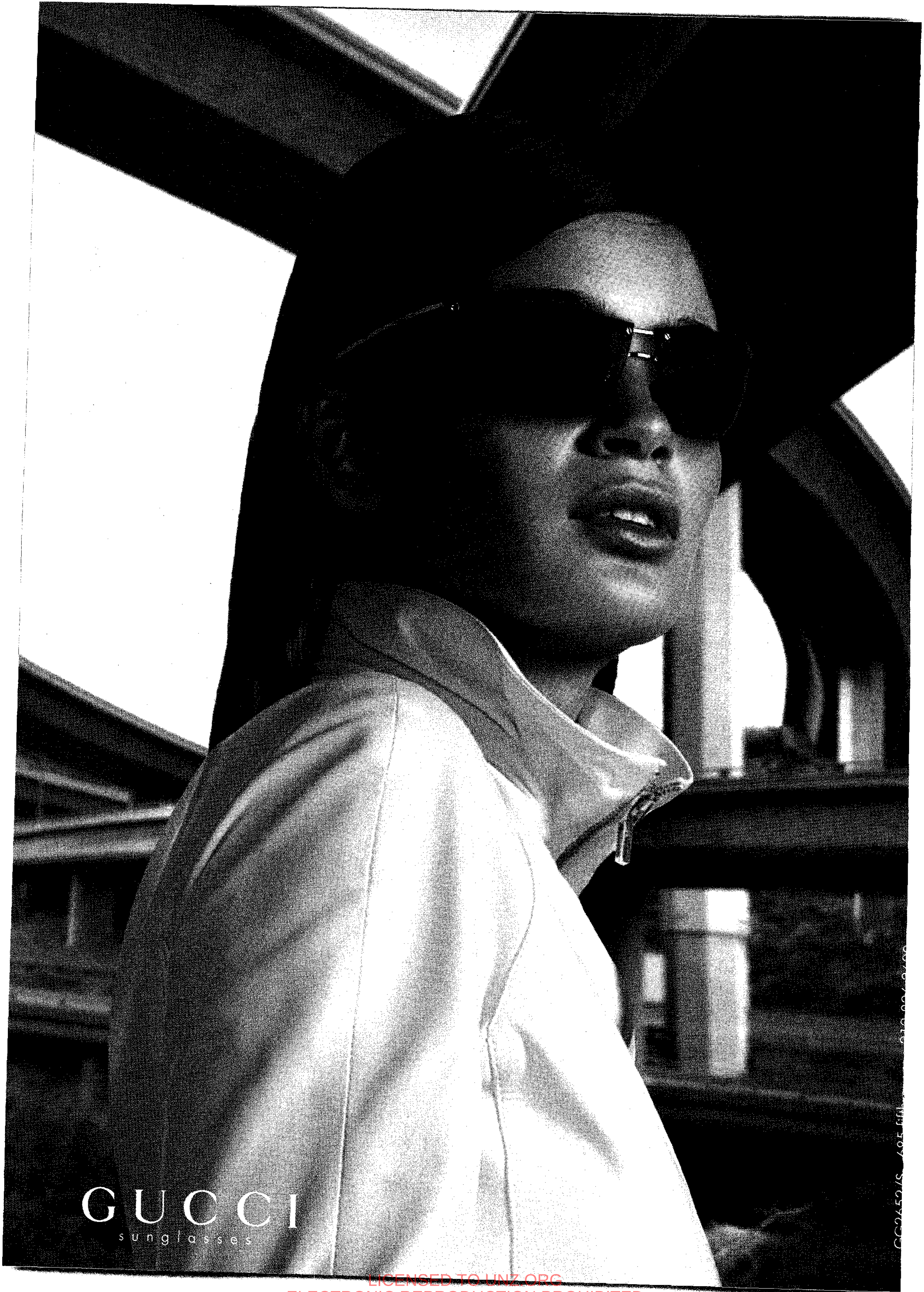
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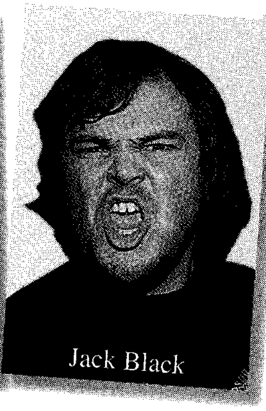
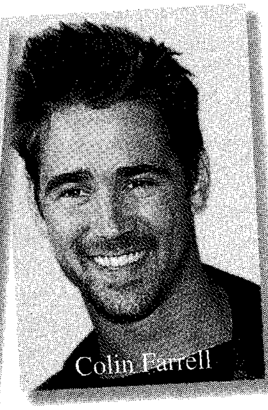
I miss the animal buoyancy, and the animal vitality. I did not mind that it had no meaning and no depth.—Anaïs Nin

Young Bucks

acing a shortage of male movie stars, Hollywood is eagerly paying more than 1 million to names like Colin Farrell. *Colin Farrell?* By Rachel Abramowitz

Jason Lee


Jack Black


Colin Farrell

Jason Biggs

Hollywood has been plucking actors from anonymity ever since Lana Turner made history at the counter of Schwabs on Sunset. But this season, itters about next spring's anticipated actors' and screenwriters' strike have created what Universal Studios VP of casting Joanna Colbert is calling an "unprecedented" feeding frenzy for newcomers—specifically young white males. With the dance cards of bankable big stars like Pitt, Cruise, and Willis already full, the studios, desperate to stockpile films before the strike, are duking it out for unknowns like Johnny Knoxville and Colin Farrell. "There are no leading men available," says Colbert. "So we're looking to the next level."

Prices for these barely-knowns have skyrocketed, creating a bizarre new millionaire boys' club. Knoxville, star of MTV's *Jackass,* will earn a reported $1 million to star in MGM's *The Tree.* The rotund singer-comedian Jack Black (last seen as John Cusack's sidekick in *High Fidelity*) will be savoring close to $3 million to star opposite Gwyneth Paltrow in the Farrelly brothers' *Shallow Hal. American Pie*'s Jason Biggs will net $2 million for *Saving Silverman,* and Jason Lee (*Almost Famous*) will get his seven figures for *Stealing Stanford.* Dubliner Colin Farrell has particularly profited from bigger stars' busy schedules. Never heard of him? He stepped into *Phone Booth* when Jim Carrey passed, and into *Hart's War* when Edward Norton bailed. He'll be assuming Matt Damon's role in Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report*—*if* he can fit the film into his schedule. "He had a lot of offers, so it caused his price to go up," says *Hart's War* producer David Ladd, who will have to pay Farrell north of a million for his services. "It's demand and supply. We all want the same people, and the agents are shrewd enough to drive a hard bargain."

The next candidate for the club is Eric Bana. Two years ago, the 32-year-old was toiling away on an Australian sketch-comedy show. His life changed when a reporter asked Australia's most notorious criminal, Mark "Chopper" Read—famous for having chopped off his own ears—who he envisioned playing him in his biopic.

>

You're *Still* Home Till Christmas

The holiday season is time to remember that this isn't such a heartless city after all. For example, city marshals don't usually enforce eviction orders from December 15 until the New Year. "It has been the practice of some marshals to use their discretion and choose not to evict residential tenants during the holiday season," says a spokesman for the City Department of Investigation. "Neither the DOI nor the city has any reason to believe that this practice is disruptive or objectionable." Dawn Sullivan, chair of the Eastside Tenants Coalition, says marshals often have to be reminded of the tradition, and even then, "if a marshal is getting schmoozed a little bit or greased" by a landlord, "then you're going to get evicted."

You've Got Males

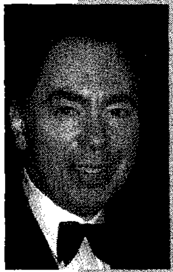
After reading the *Times Magazine*'s recent Hollywood issue, directors Allison Anders (*Sugar Town*) and Nancy Savoca (*True Love*) sent a brief, outraged letter to the magazine. "In the entire 144-page issue,"

Photographs: left to right, Celebrity; Nina Prommer/Globe Photos; Fitzroy Barrett (2).

Talking Points

they wrote, "with over 65 films and filmmakers cited, only three are not white males. (The tally includes passing mentions.) And a heavyweight roster of 66 directors—Amy Heckerling, Martha Coolidge, Gus Van Sant, Sofia Coppola, and Jonathan Demme among them—signed it. "Since it was an issue trying to represent 'what's going on, now and beyond,' it's strange that we're not there," says Anders. The idea for the letter came from 50/50, her group of woman filmmakers—"one of those things that are talked about amongst ourselves." Still, this being Hollywood, some people picked up on the imbalance before others. "Steven Soderbergh said that he only noticed it after he saw *he* wasn't in the issue."

Now and Forever, but Not *Right* Now



After a decade of flops, Broadway producer Cameron Mackintosh recently said he's swearing off new musicals. But what with the nostalgia time clock accelerating, how long till he brings back his biggest hit, *Cats,* which just ended its run in September? "You know, he did say, when it closed, *This is only the end of its first life,* meaning that it will have nine," notes Andrew Lloyd Webber's representative, Peter Brown. "But I think it's a little early."

Publishing

How Green Was My *Valley*

Here's a familiar publishing fairy tale: Bright young writer puts out a few impressive magazine pieces on a buzzworthy topic; masterful agent sends around a brief proposal to panting publishers; seven-figure advance ensues.

In the fall of 1997, *New Yorker* writer John Heilemann scored a reported $1 million advance from HarperCollins for a book on Silicon Valley. He planned to write the book in twenty months. "You don't realize how lonely writing a book is," Heilemann says now of the project he compares to David Halberstam's *The Powers That Be.*

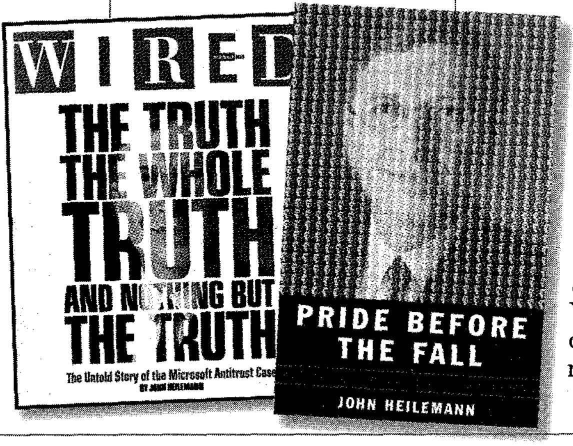
As Heilemann worked, an excited HarperCollins, sure it had *the* book on Silicon Valley, was girding its sales force with feverish descriptions of the unseen manuscript, tour plans, and ad buys. Then the deadline passed. "The book will come out when John's ready," says Heilemann's friend John Battelle, founder of *The Industry Standard,* "not when the publisher wants it to come out. Until he feels he's got it right, he's not going to stop reporting." Instead of *The Valley,* the big technology book last fall, when the tech boom was at its apex, was Michael Lewis's *The New New Thing.*

But now comes the news that on January 9, Heilemann will publish a book about the Microsoft trial that came out of a *Wired* cover story. *Wired* editor-in-chief Katrina Heron says that when Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's decision against Microsoft came down in June, "I told John, 'There's a great magazine piece here.' "

So Heron joined Heilemann at a conference in Telluride. "We locked ourselves in a hotel room with a beautiful view, ordered room service, and just worked it out for six hours," Heilemann remembers. "When we were finishe we were both totally exhausted." Heilemann says he relied on his three years of *Valley* reporting to write the piece—and then the book.

The result, *Pride Before the Fall,* is set to hit stores the same day as Ken Auletta's book on the same subject, *World War 3.0.* Meanwhile, all involved insist that *The Valley* is still very much under way. "Fortunately," says HarperBusiness publisher Adrian Zackheim, "we don't have to publish the book about the Valley this week." So which book fulfills that million-dollar contract? "That sounds like a money question," says Heilemann's agent, Andrew Wylie. "And we don't talk about money."

MARION MANEKER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THE TRUTH THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH
The Untold Story of the Microsoft Antitrust Case
BY JOHN HEILEMANN
PRIDE BEFORE THE FALL
JOHN HEILEMANN

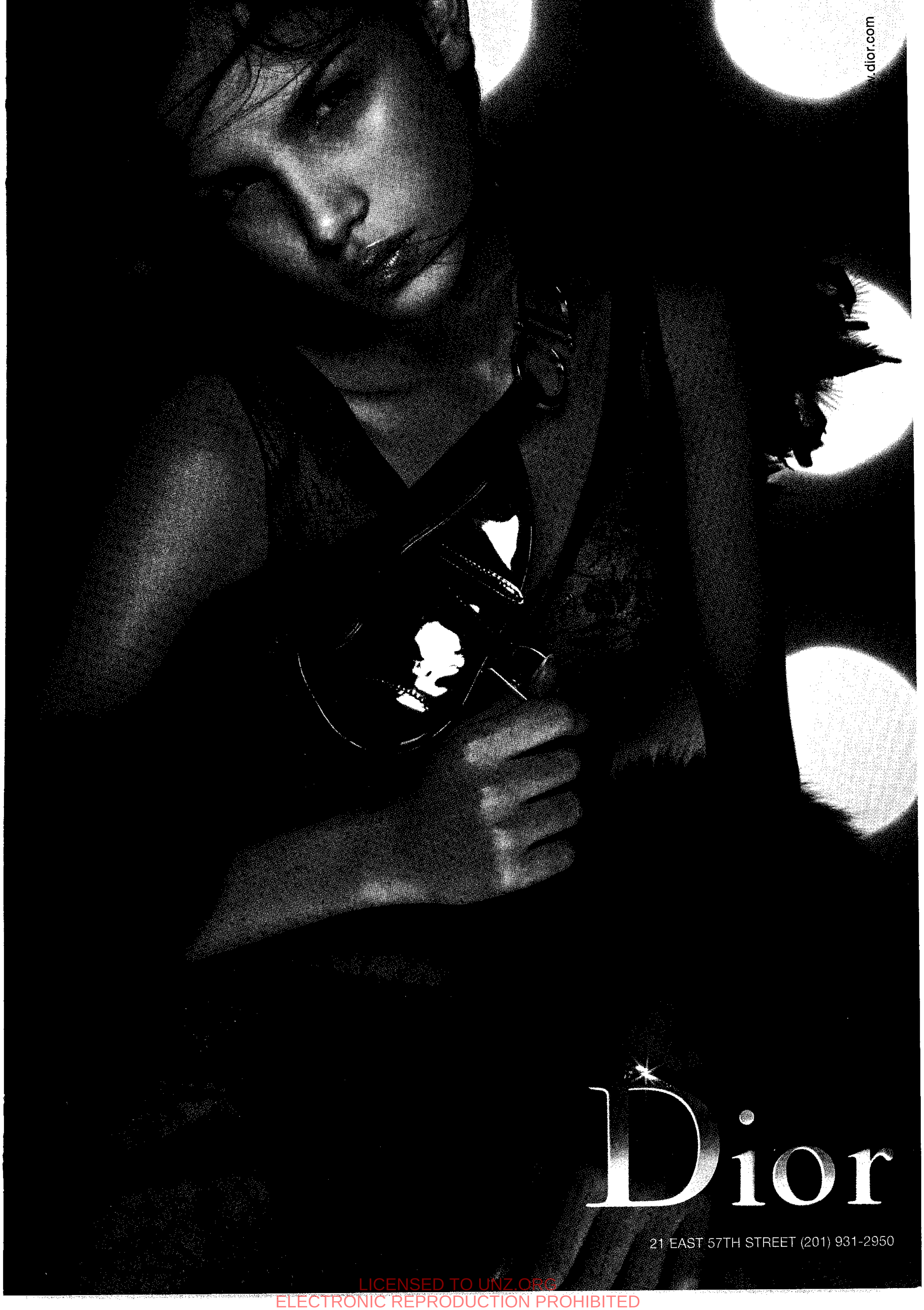
YOUNG BUCKS

continued from page 33

He suggested Bana, who walked off with an Australian Film Institute Award, Australia's equivalent to the Oscar, for his performance in *Chopper.* When advance copies of the film swept through town this past September, Read's prescience was proved. "It became a big frenzy. Every agent in town was going after Bana," says William Morris agent John Fogelman, who won the race. "In this town, anything new has real currency to it." William Morris held a special industry screening of *Chopper* on the Fox lot. "We flew Bana back to L.A. for four days, and he met with major filmmakers and studio heads," says Fogelman. "He left with a bagful of offers." Bana ultimately opted for a lead in the upcoming Jerry Bruckheimer–Ridley Scott extravaganza *Black Hawk Down.*

"The best talent is getting gobbled up right away," says Bruckheimer, "and the agents can certainly ask for more money." The producer insists that counting on someone like Bana, totally unknown in America, to carry a $100 million war epic isn't a gamble at all. "We wouldn't put him in the movie," he says firmly, "if we didn't think he was a movie star."

Photograph: left, Ron Davis/Shooting Star.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Talking Points

Warning: Smelling May Be Hazardous to Your Health

After a Brooklyn woman died in a fire started by a neglected candle, agitated officials declared war on aromatherapy. One told the *Times*, "This is a dangerous object." Still, beauty editors burn them nonstop, though candles "are against fire code," warns Debbie Recksiek, building-services administrator at Condé Nast. But Big Paraffin is unrepentant. "Most of ours have a warning on them," says the owner of one candle store, which otherwise pushes a softly glowing lifestyle. "But do you really need a warning? It's *fire*."

Early Admission

According to the New York *Post*, British scientists have developed a method to test an embryo for low IQ. Given the bruising competition to get a child into a choice private school, we called the head of admissions at Spence and asked if she'd recommend the test for moms-to-be concerned about whether their progeny will be sufficiently exceptional. "Testing's shaky enough when they're 4," says Alice Shedlin. "I don't think that there could possibly be any predictor when they're still in utero."

Music

Record Breakers

'Our model is the Virgin brand of seven or eight years ago, before it got diluted by shitty cola and bridal shops," says Maurice Bernstein (pictured, on right), lounging with his partner, Jonathan Rudnick (left), in the TriBeCa loft that houses their company, Giant Step. "The response we're after is 'That's cool, that's hip—*I'm going to buy into that.*'"

Over the past ten years, Bernstein and Rudnick have made Giant Step a local cultural-capital cornerstone with their innovative approach to music marketing, breaking new artists by targeting tastemakers and the places they hang out in, promoting cutting-edge shows, and releasing influential dance-music albums like *NuYorican Soul* on their own label. By next year, says Bernstein, Giant Step will become a multi-million-dollar company, and new plans call for taking on nonmusic clients—"as long as we can protect the brand."

Maintaining brand recognition shouldn't be difficult: Levi's has just signed on for a fourth year of sponsorship of Giant Step's "Miles Ahead" series of concerts. And Giant Step has built a reputation among major-label clients like Epic and Def Jam for marketing successes with such artists as Jill Scott and Macy Gray. "We start from the assumption that we're not going to get radio or MTV," says Rudnick. "So we build a critical mass among tastemakers to create a situation where the artist just isn't going to go away."

Their recent campaign for Sade helped move nearly 400,000 copies of her new record during its first week in stores, outselling even Ricky Martin's highly anticipated second album. For Macy Gray, "they made up a CD sampler and sent it out to their database, which includes cafés, clubs, and restaurants," says Rose Noone, VP of A&R at Epic Records, Gray's label. "We heard the music *everywhere*."

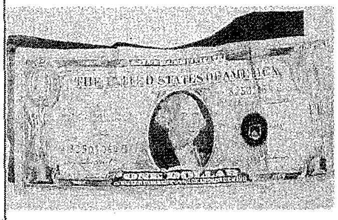
"They have an enormous mailing list," enthuses Def Jam product manager Deidre Graham. She hired Giant Step to market Musiq Soulchild's debut album last month, "which enabled us to reach certain markets, like dance-music D.J.'s, that Def Jam couldn't cater to," she says, noting that the previously unknown singer's record sold 55,000 copies in its first week. "I wish *all* my artists fit into what they do."

ETHAN BROWN

Art by Numbers

Printing Money

Andy Warhol once said business was the best art. Now the market for his work is proving his point, with interest expanding from his paintings and prints to his drawings, such as those on view through December 18 at Van de Weghe Fine Arts, the gallery owned by Larry Gagosian's former top lieutenant, Christophe Van de Weghe. In addition to three works from the early sixties that have sold for prices from $50,000 to $90,000, Van de Weghe has a silkscreen of *The Kiss (Bela Lugosi)* on reserve for $800,000 and a *Cagney* silkscreen on reserve for $700,000. Los Angeles megacollector Eli Broad bought a similar Lugosi portrait from Gagosian for $800,000, and other Warhol works on paper have recently been acquired by Donald Fisher of the Gap and Minneapolis collector Darwin Reedy. What's the next growth indicator for the Warhol market? Look for his hand-stitched photographs to jump in price—from $25,000 to $100,000. JOSH BAER


THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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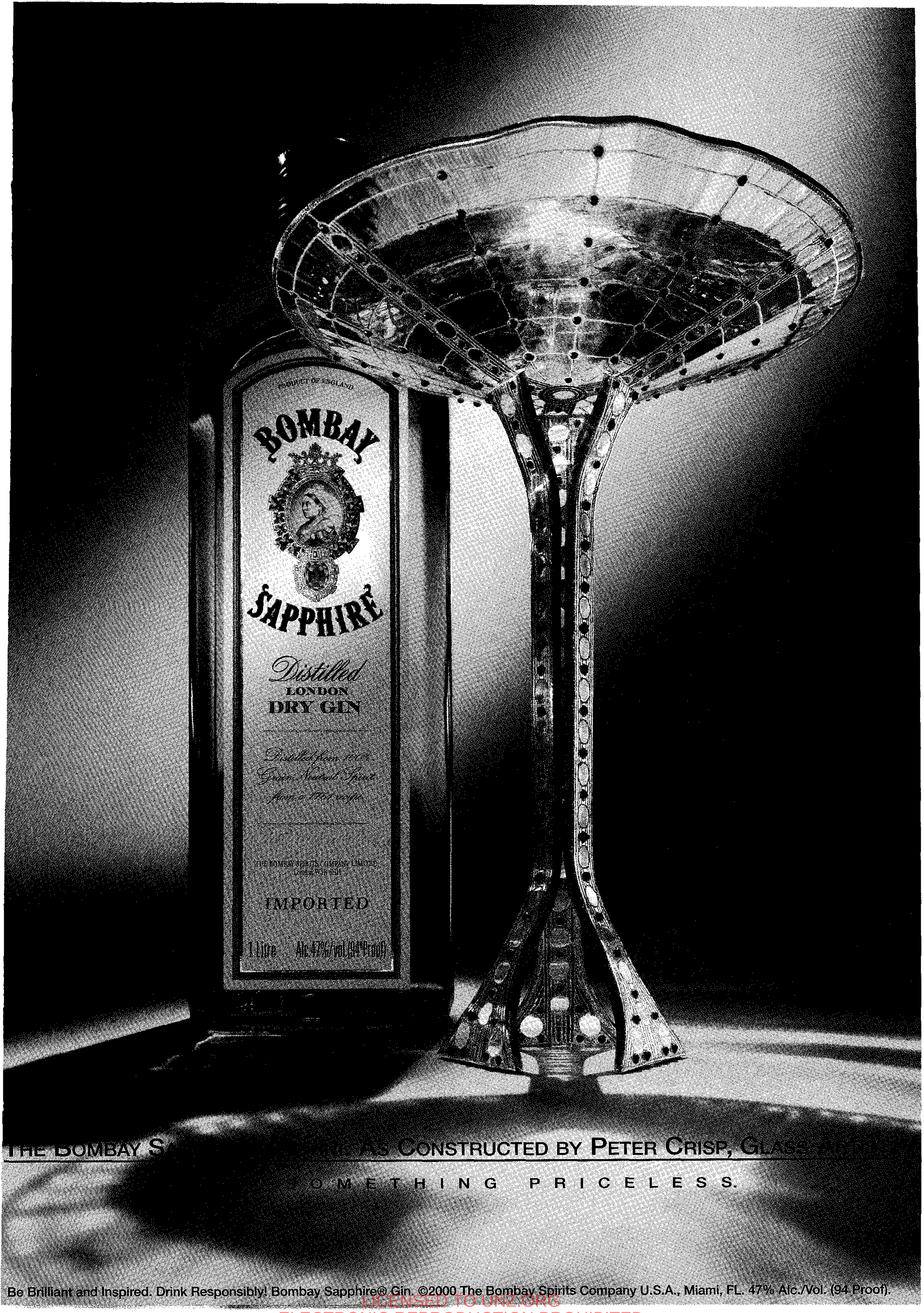
Photographs: from top, Matthias Braschler; Neal Peters; courtesy Christophe Van de Weghe Fine Art.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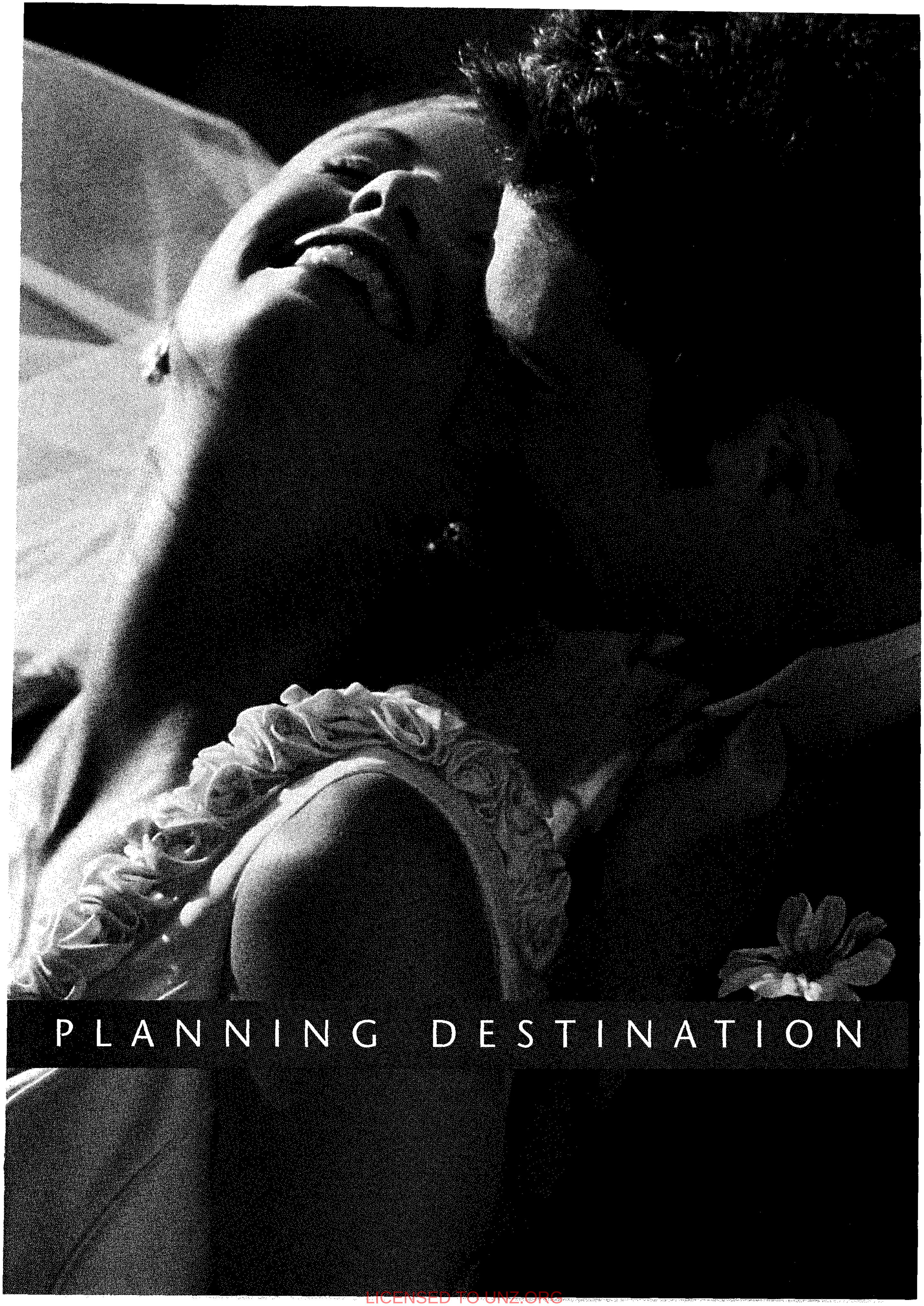
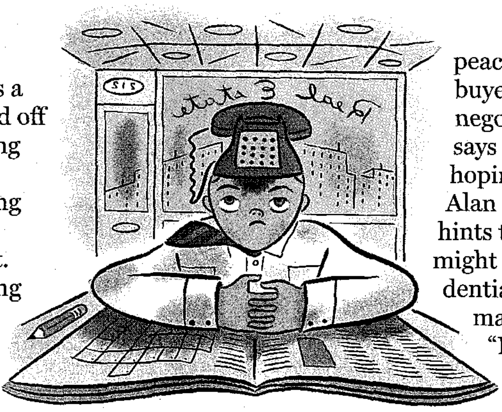


PLANNING DESTINATION

Lowering the Boom

In the weeks before Christmas, all through the town,
hardly a buyer is stirring, and the brokers all frown.



NOBODY'S PANICKing—yet. But as a year that started off in an unforgiving blood sport of bidding, flipping, and backstabbing winds down, brokers are finding themselves adrift. "The phones aren't ringing off the hook," admits Diane Ramirez, president of the Halstead Property Company. Off the record, brokerage heads say that there is no way they're going to say anything to spook buyers.

On the record, they'll just observe that there's a "general hesitancy in the market," as Bellmarc principal Neil Binder puts it. "A bit more of a reservation for people to take the plunge."

Brokers blame the general unsettledness of this holiday season—NASDAQ, the Middle East, the attenuated presidential election—rather than the storm clouds of recession. "It would be impossible to not recognize that in times of fluctuation people are inclined to hold back," says Ashforth Warburg president Fred Peters, carefully. "We've experienced a particularly slow fourth quarter."

"I almost think that we were on a roller-coaster ride that was going up, up, up, and we plateaued," says Ramirez. "The froth has come off the market," says Douglas Elliman development director Andy Gerringer.

Brokers who spent much of the year playing giddy peacemakers between buyers ("If there was any negotiation, it was up," says Peters) are now hoping for salvation from Alan Greenspan and his hints that interest rates might go down. The presidential fuzziness made matters even worse—"I've had sellers who won't counterbid because of it," says Kirk Henckels, director of Stribling Private Brokerage. "This is a totally psychological market, and this isn't helping."

"The big sales aren't being affected," says Elliman's Dolly Lenz. "If it's over $10 million, people aren't hesitating. But I'm finding that under $2 million, people are holding off. It's that horrible standoff market. I can do well in an up market or a down market. It's when the sellers are ready and the buyers aren't sure—that's when you get killed."

On the Move

Exit the Highwayman

Interior designer **Waldo Fernandez**, who's decorated for Elizabeth Taylor, Warren Beatty, and Sean Connery, is finally getting off the highway. He sold his summer cottage, at the intersection of Route 27 and Georgica Road in East Hampton, for $750,000, through Sotheby's. Fernandez bought it in the early nineties after visiting his pal La Liz in the Hamptons and deciding to go bi-coastal. "He bought the least expensive thing in the Estate area and used it in the summer," says a broker. In pre-fabulous times, the property was home to a pony corral popular with local kids. Fernandez remade the old shingle house and added a pool. But how noisy is it? "They did extensive landscaping and there's a stockade fence between you and the highway," says a broker. "It's surprisingly not so bad." Rumor is the buyer's a bit hearing-impaired anyway. Fernandez, who usually lives on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, bought a house in a quieter Hamptons precinct.

Big Deals

Park Slope

77 Prospect Place
3-bed, 2-bath carriage house. Ask: $899,000. Sell: $1.2 million. One week on market.

A Douglas Elliman broker and her husband, the director of photography from *Survivor*, owned this carriage house, which had been re-façaded in an urban-renewal effort back in the seventies. Unfortunately, that meant it looked like an "ugly Staten Island project," says Corcoran's Andrew Van Dusen, who represented the sellers in an alliance of competitive brokerages that would make Richard Hatch proud. His clients had given it a complete makeover, and when they decided to move to California, seven bidders were beguiled by its thirteen-foot ceilings, oak floors, and private garden; fellow Corcoran broker Mimi Derti's won. The others were voted off the island. LIZ JUDGE

Upper East Side

422 East 72nd Street
3-bed, 3½-bath, 1,900-square-foot condo. Ask: $1.495 million. Sell: $1.45 million. Charges and taxes: $2,300. Three days on market.

Thirty-one floors above York Avenue, this pad, in a late-eighties tower called the Oxford, came "complete with a tenant," says Douglas Elliman's Dolly Lenz. Her client, a big shot at Citigroup who was already an Oxonian, wanted to buy a bigger place. "Apparently he wants to use it someday himself but not now, so he wanted it leased," she says. It's a corporate apartment. The view ("You expect a view at this price?") is of other condo towers. C.S.

Photograph by Tim Street-Porter. Illustration by Michael Klein.

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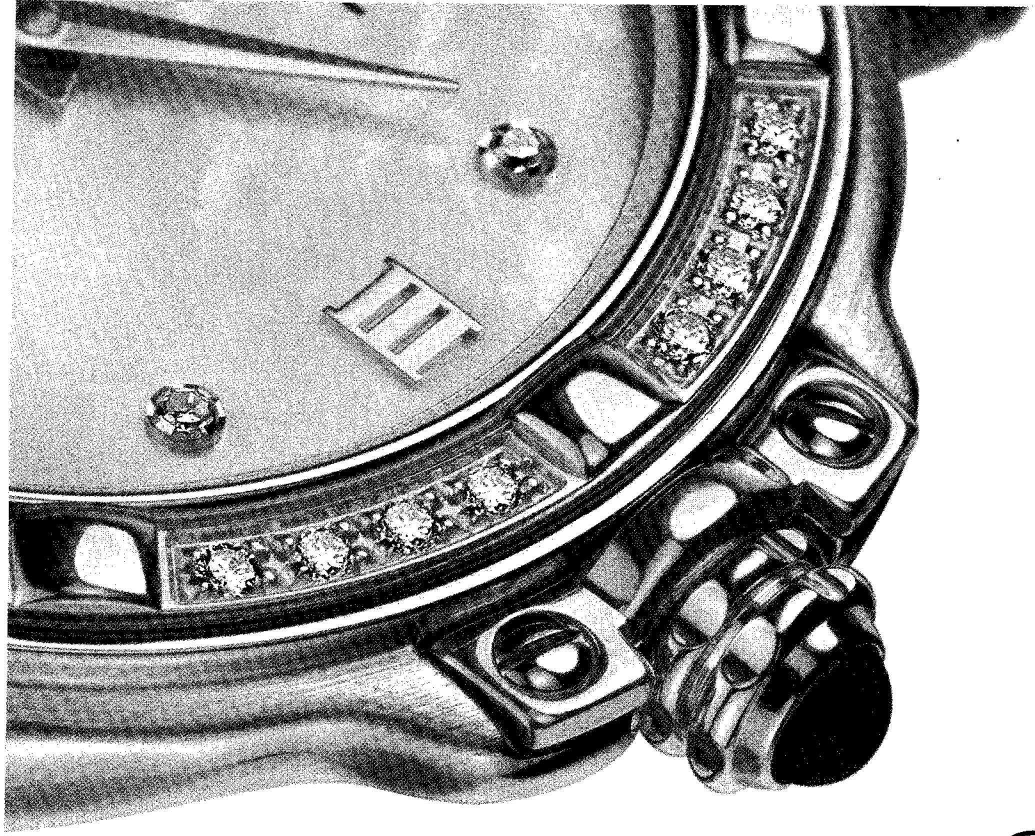

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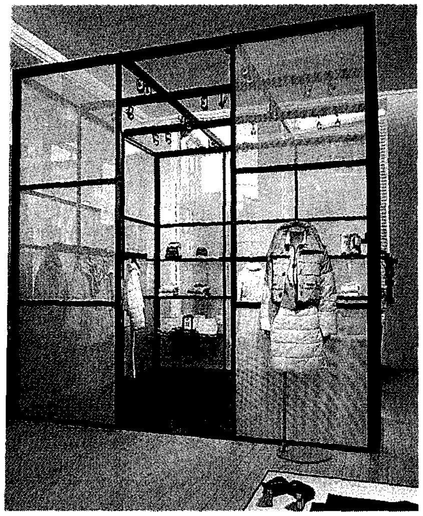
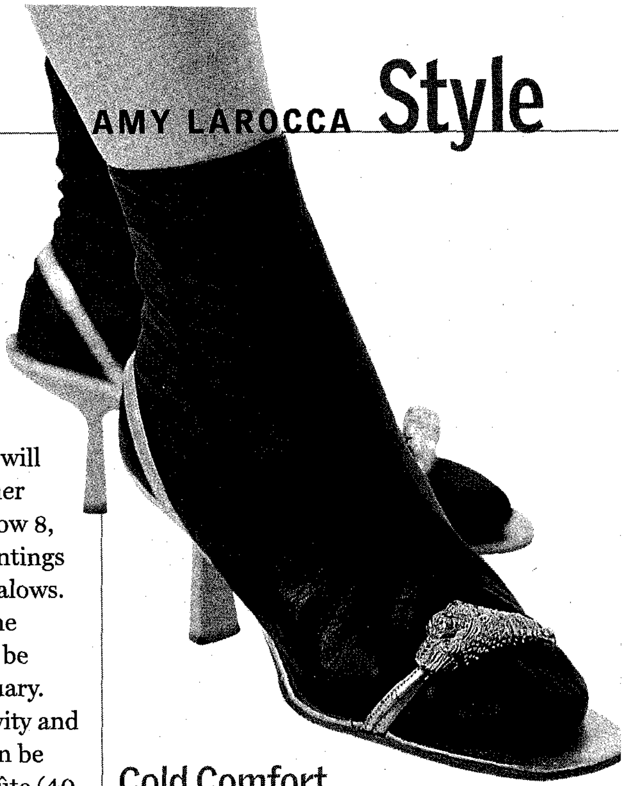


Changing Chanel

With floppy cloth flowers running eck and neck with fur tippets for the rend of the Moment crown, the urists among us might consider eturning to the source: Chanel. Since December 6, it's been a little easier, s the venerable French house has one downtown and opened its loors at 139 Spring Street in SoHo. Architect Peter Marino was ssigned the task of updating the mage of the company's shops to omething hip enough to house Chanel's trendy and futuristic skiwear collection while retaining its *très chien* egacy. But don't expect anything too extreme. After all, Marino points out, "Chanel owns beige." A.L.

Key Party

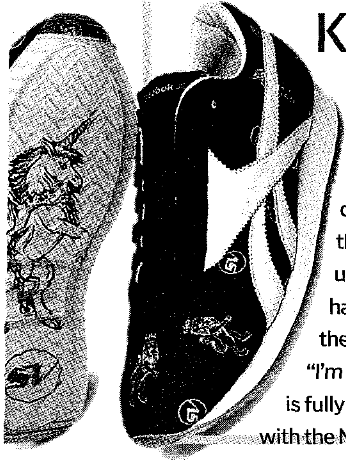
Since even Pastis has become overrun with vacationing Midwesterners, those looking to swill with a self-selective set should make room on their Tiffany key chains. Lot 61 VIPs will be issued their own keys to owner Amy Sacco's new salon, Bungalow 8, named after Jeremy Blake's paintings of the Beverly Hills Hotel bungalows. "It's like a hotel suite without the hotel," says Sacco, who plans to be serving apple martinis by February. Until then, cravings for exclusivity and Piper-Heidsieck champagne can be satisfied in the Red Room at Flûte (40 East 20th Street). A separate entrance leads to a cavelike brown-and-red space designed by Jonathan Adler, which can hold 30 guests, who will have received an electronic key card in the mail good for that night only. "I'm a misanthropic shut-in," says Adler, "so being in a controlled environment is about the only thing that could get me out of my house." SARAH BERNARD



Cold Comfort

It's always a challenge to stay sexy in winter's bulky jackets and hats and layers. And while fashion's most ardent followers haven't yet given up their strappy sandals this season, the recent teeth-chattering temperatures are making frostbite something of an occupational hazard. Some women have taken to strapping on what amount to snow tires for shoes: coin-purse-size sacks or little leather booties from Callaghan ($40, available at Kerquelen, 44 Greene Street; 212-431-1771) that slip over open toes or chilly feet. Coordinate them with the handless gloves that Alexander McQueen did for his fall 2000 Givenchy show. MONICA ROY

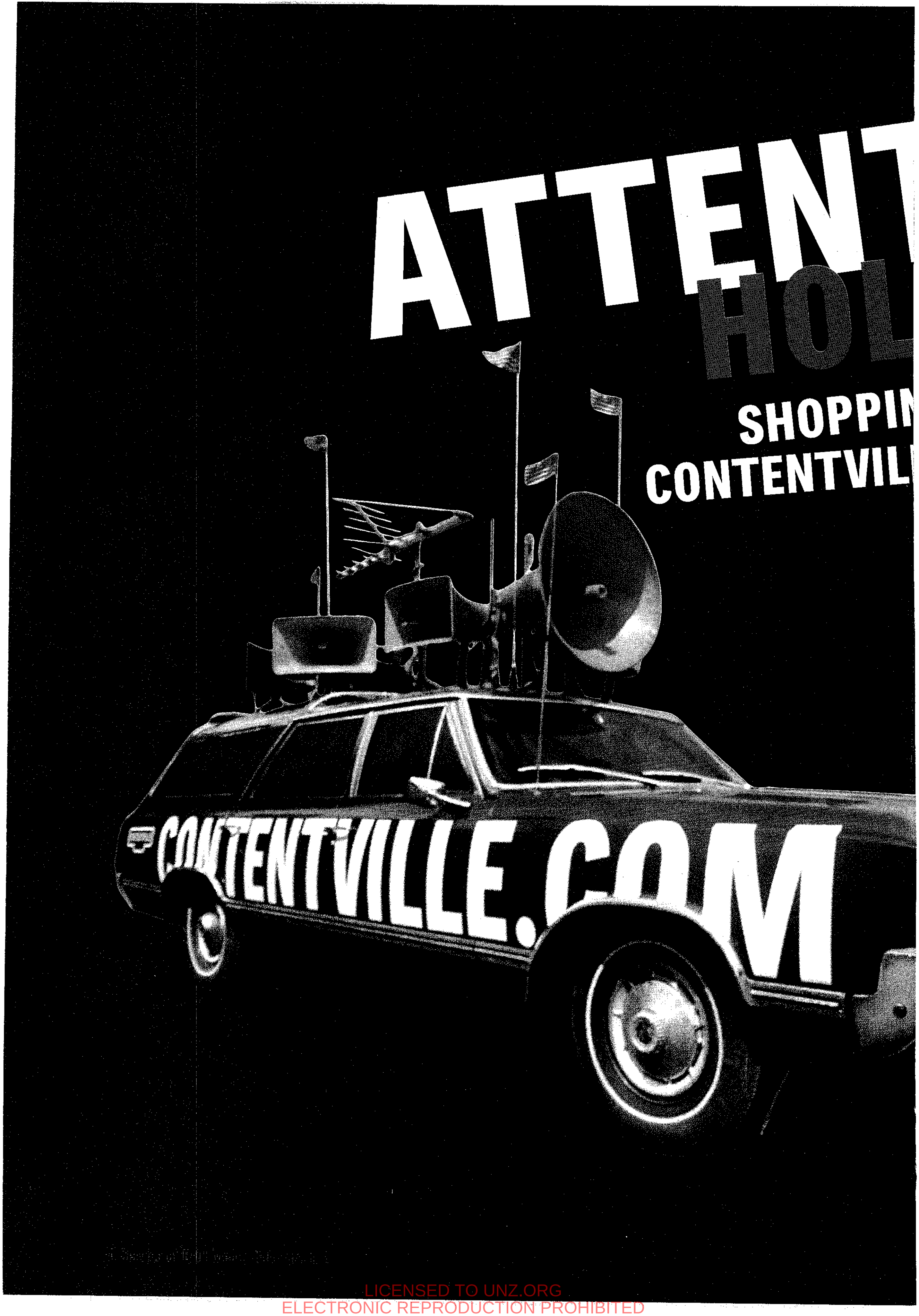
Smart Set



Keanan Duffty

Like all good English boys, Keanan Duffty is a huge David Bowie fan. And so when this St. Martin's graduate moved to New York in 1993 and set about designing a line of men's clothing, it was only natural that he listened hard to "Young Americans" and came up with the name Slinky Vagabond. With spiky red hair, big pants, and an uncompromising sense of humor, the 36-year-old Duffty has the air of someone younger. "I'm 36, but I'm also 18," he says with a grin. This sensibility is fully apparent in his clothing, where tropical fish coexist with the Nevada desert on photo-print T-shirts, and "Naughty Knights" remember their chain-mail tops but forget their pants ($50–$98). Duffty opened a Slinky Vagabond shop (50 Spring Street; 212-925-9833) December 1 with his wife, accessories designer Nancy Garcia, where his clothing and specially designed Reebok sneakers are available, along with quirky pop-culture gems like Timothy Leary records. Success, though, is measured another way for Duffty: David Bowie was photographed earlier this year wearing a Slinky Vagabond top. A.L.

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Carina Salvi; Joe Scafuro; shoes by Gucci; Karen Pearson; Joe Scafuro. Illustration by Marcellus Hall.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James J. Cramer THE BOTTOM LINE

Mutual Subtractio

You played this year's frenetic market safely and conservatively—plenty of cash and a few good mutual funds. So why are you still feeling so queasy?

AMERICA'S TORRID LOVE AFFAIR WITH MUTUAL funds, which was sparked by the fantastic returns of Peter Lynch at Fidelity's Magellan Fund, then stoked with the great returns by S&P 500 index funds, and finally went red-hot with the massive performance by the Janus family, has, almost overnight, turned into a vicious lovers' quarrel. The next few weeks will determine whether this spat winds up in a nasty divorce. In many ways, the relationship holds the key to whether this crippled market can stage any sort of Santa Claus rally.

The nineties belonged to the mutual funds, particularly those that embraced technology. And even when tech lagged, either because of a slowdown, like the ones in 1990 and 1994, or a collapse in demand, like the one that followed the 1997 Asia crisis, these funds still got lucky. Either the Fed cut rates dramatically, or a new innovation—massive networking of personal computers, the Internet—swamped the negatives and brought ever-higher earnings growth.

In the past two years, the tech funds' performance has been so extraordinary that they drew money from bonds, from index funds, and from managers who embraced value strategies. These funds became asset-gathering juggernauts. They knew no boundaries, because tech stocks were all chronically undervalued. Every dollar that came in over the transom got put to work, regardless of how the stocks were doing, because we all knew that tech grew to the sky. Were there levels at which the money *shouldn't* be put to work, because stocks, at times, got too crazed? Never.

Anyway, people don't send these managers money with the idea that caution will be exercised; they wanted the pedal to the metal. In fact, for those of us laboring at hedge funds, where we bet against many of the overvalued stocks these mutual funds were propelling still higher, we began to despise them for their hubris, their inability to see that you can't just walk up any old stock to where you want it to go. This is, of course, exactly what some of these funds were doing: using incoming new dollars to prop up prices of the old stocks you already own. The SEC recently opened an investigation into this practice of portfolio pumping, but we don't know which funds they are going to pursue.

The mutual funds have driven me so crazy with these kinds of machinations that I even developed two fictional characters in my daily TheStreet.com columns, Buzz Gould and Batch Hammer, who are forever marking up their stocks or creating performance to make up for their own stock-picking shortcomings. They can't accept the market's verdict and, through sheer power of marketing, take their new dollars and push them into a handful of stocks to keep them higher than they would normally be.

That game worked for so long because the fundamentals, the economic background for technology, were nothing short of fantastic. This year, however, everything came unglued.

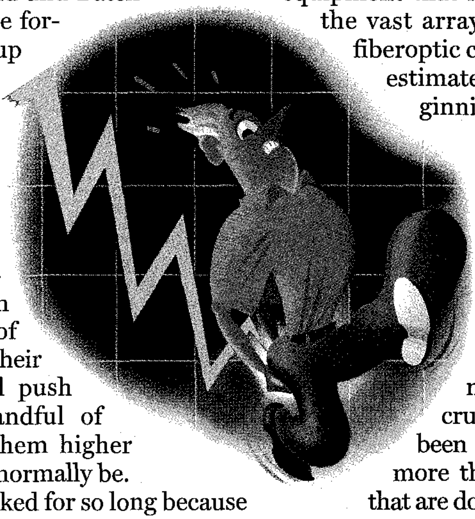
First, insiders who saw their stocks thrust to ridiculous heights this spring began to sell their shares with reckless fervor. Who can blame them? Stocks had been taken to levels that were just plain absurd.

Second, the Fed took rates up six times in just a few months, in part to slow down the borrowing by individuals who were buying stocks on margin in ord to take advantage of the endless bull.

Third, the personal-computer marke which had been fired up by the deman to get on the Web, cooled as the Web b came less new and fascinating.

Fourth, cell phones, which seemed t have endless growth, sputtered for th first time since they became popular. W still don't know why that happened, but i sure came at a terrible time for the semiconductor industry, which had ridde cell-phone demand to monster heights.

And finally, the last major driver o technology, the telephone companies ran out of money for all of that fanc equipment that had to be bought fo the vast array of networking an fiberoptic companies to beat th estimates they set at the beginning of the year.



This crushing combination snuck up on these managers almost overnight. They were so busy walking their stocks up that they finally got caught buying at the top. Now their performances have been crushed and their year's been obliterated. There are more than 120 major funds that are down more than 40 percent this year, a staggering number. But that only tells a portion of the story. Much of the money came into these funds during the first few months of the year, when the averages were much, much higher. Losses of 50 to 60 percent are now commonplace.

TheStreet.com

Check out TheStreet.com's "10 Questions" this week. John Calamos, manager of the Calamos Growth Fund, is in the hot seat. Available free at www.thestreet.com.

Illustration by Eric Palma.

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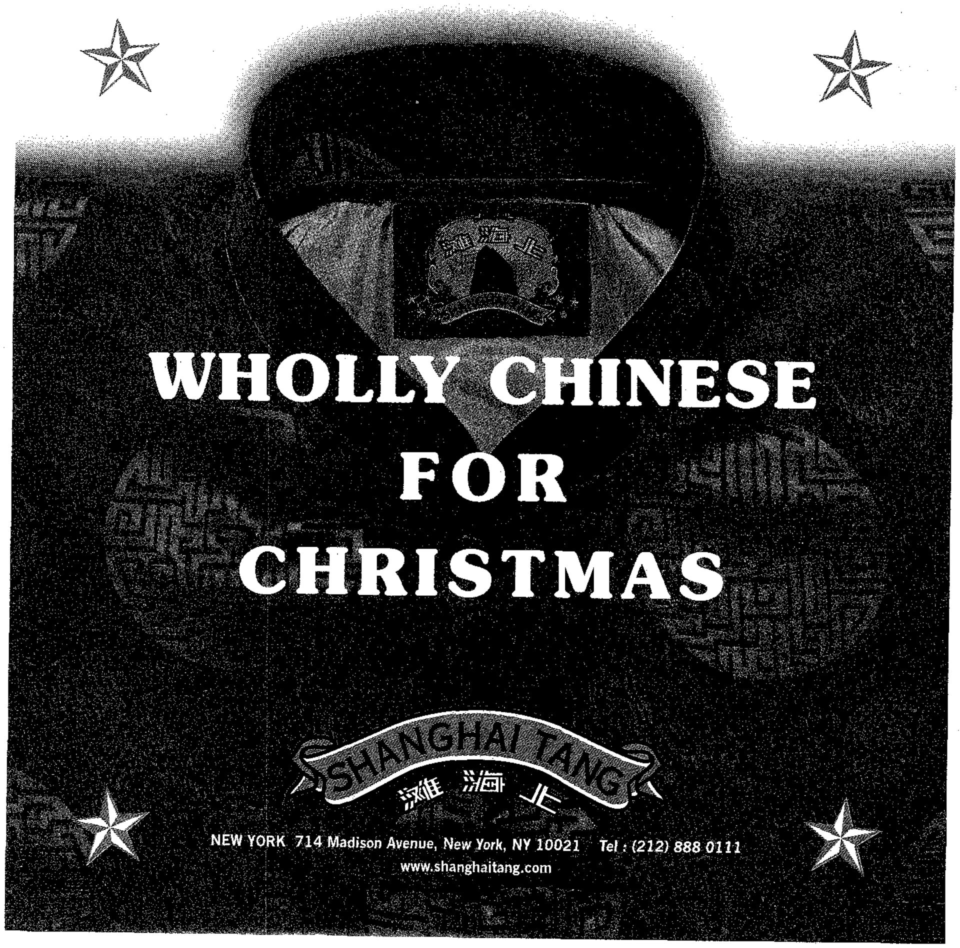
People in these big-cap tech fun are bleeding from their eyeballs a seem to be in no mood to give mo money to these managers. Which why these next few weeks hold the k If these funds can somehow genera some performance, either because t Federal Reserve surprises the mark with a decline in rates or the selling tech somehow abates, they might able to narrow the losses. Last week, t Fed gave them some reason to ho that an easing in rates might actual save those that are down less than 2 percent.

But if that turns out to be too littl too late, the gloom will be carried i to the first quarter, as individua continue to flock to the only ass that seems to be working right no cash.

"There are more than 120 major funds that are down more than 40 percent this year, a **staggering** number.'

Fortunately, these funds have als raised a lot of cash in order to handl year-end redemptions. And if thos redemptions don't materialize in a couple weeks, the funds can take tha sidelined cash and put it back t work, hopefully driving their stock back up. Still, they have a problem they have never faced before: There is not much to buy. Tech companies' fundamentals continue to deteriorate. The possibility of putting money to work in a stock that might "blow up" on an earnings disappointment has never been greater. Which is why, in the end, I believe there will be more pain before there's a second honeymoon. ■

James J. Cramer is manager of a hedge fund and co-founder of TheStreet.com. At the time of publication, his fund has a long position in TheStreet.com. His fund often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns, both before and after the columns are published, and the positions that his fund takes may change at any time. Under no circumstances does the information in this column represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks. Cramer's writings provide insights into the dynamics of money management and are not a solicitation for transactions. While he cannot provide investment advice or recommendations, he invites comments at jjcletters@thestreet.com.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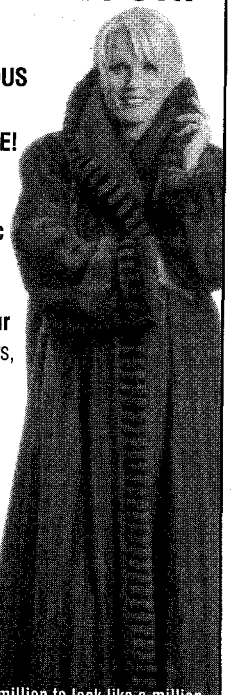

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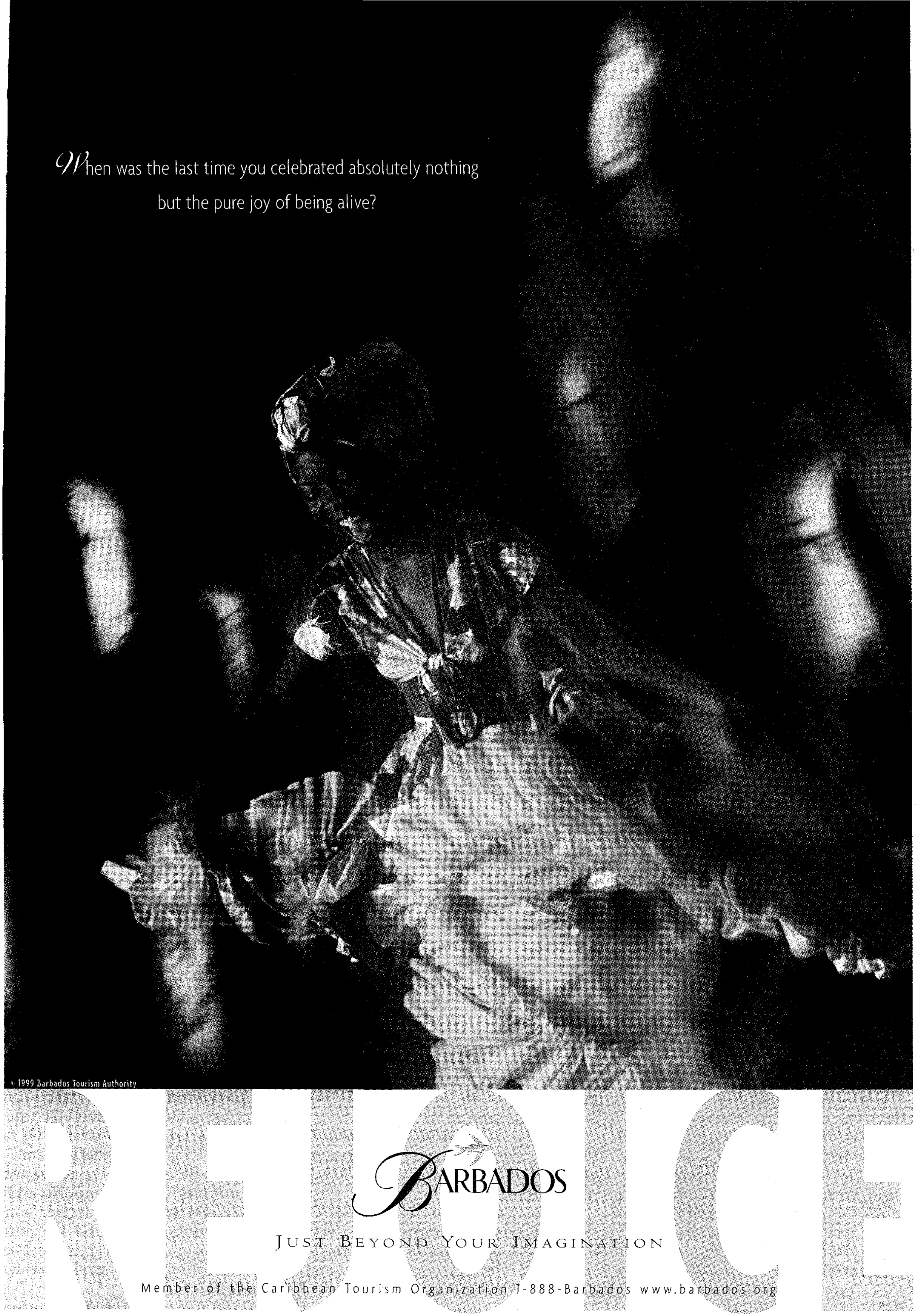

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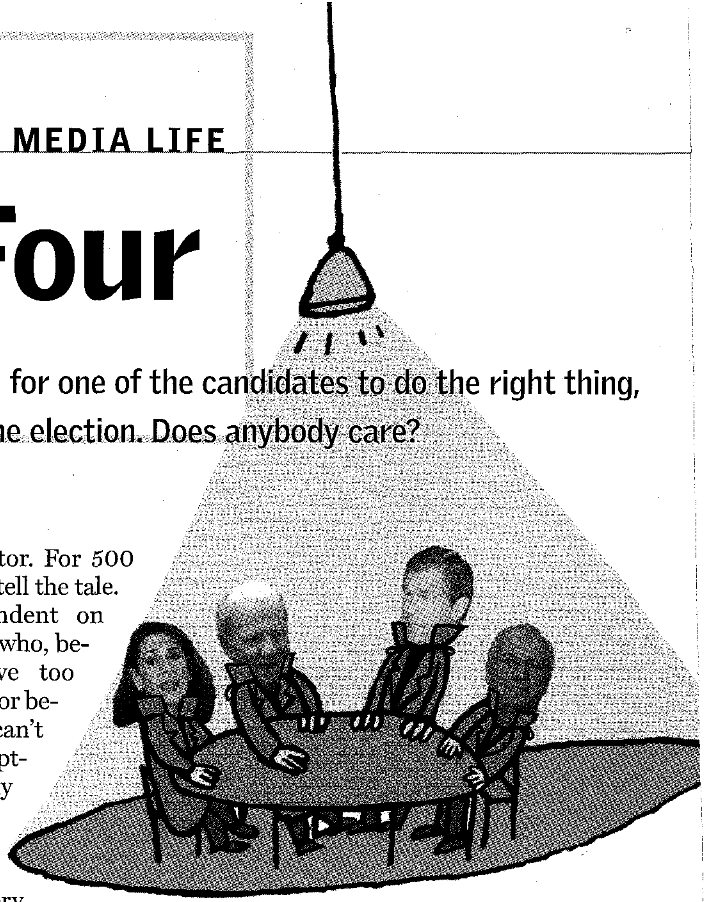
Michael Wolff THIS MEDIA LIFE

Gang of Four



While everyone was waiting for one of the candidates to do the right thing, the Bush black-bag operation stole the election. Does anybody care?

WHAT'S OUR LEVEL OF CONCERN THAT A presidential election has been stolen? At the moment, I don't think it's very high.

This could be because we consider the presidency something of relatively circumscribed value—so we're looking at a petty larceny.

Or because we tend to think of the politicians and the presidency as occupying a parallel world—Mafia dons and capos dispatching one another in a turf war. Nobody gets hurt who doesn't deserve to get hurt. (Maureen Dowd continues to refer to the Bushes as the Wasp Corleones.)

Or because, given that these are strange, aggrieved, unattractive people who, on a nightly basis, are so full of passionate intensity, we, in order not to be associated with such characters, must withdraw.

The people on television and in court—and who is unfamiliar with this level of rancor? Who hasn't been around a divorce?—have come to reflect an emotional irreality that any sort of disinterested and rational person has to shun.

So it becomes nearly impossible to hold on to the core facts: The one guy who has lost the general election by 350,000 votes, a margin larger than JFK's (and climbing daily), has claimed (the claiming part is important) victory on the basis of being 500 votes up in a state where tens of thousands of votes, at the very least, have been discarded, and which his brother controls.

But then that guy says in fact it's the *other* guy who's trying to steal it! That is, the second guy, who is trying to take it from the first guy even if the first guy stole it from the get-go, is a thief, too (or would be a thief if he could figure out how to steal). Well, this is probably halfway true. Still—there are subtleties that shouldn't be overlooked. *Like the brother.*

This confusion is part of the narration problem. To a large degree, we've eliminated the narrator. For 500 votes, you get to tell the tale. Or we're dependent on television dodos who, because they have too much time to fill or because they just can't cope with unscripted stuff, are highly unreliable narrators. As in the Clinton impeachment, every single blowhard who has gotten on the air has been wrong about basically everything (the law of reversals that governed the main campaign still holds for the interregnum phase; while we are told that Gore is toast, we all know to stay tuned). Whose voice are you comfortable with here? Who do you turn to? Zip. Nada. Fuhgeddaboutit.

Nobody can be trusted. Nobody is able to offer credible interpretations of motives (partly because their own are so suspect); no reasonably objective person has the will or the authority to dispute the claims of one side or another; and surely, none of the principals is able or willing to say anything that any sensible person thinks is even moderately genuine. (You get a taste of how Communism lasted for 60 years.)

Our unwillingness to accept—even listen to—any side of the story is a form of resistance that is also called, in New York *Times* editorial-page terms, the legitimacy issue: Will this new Bush administration have the professional respect and general support to move its agenda forward? *Well, gosh. Let me think.*

Indeed, what invariably emerges out of the information swamp is a fractured, or alternative, or even conspiratorial view of American public life.

Is it possible, for instance, that George W. has fallen off the wagon? *That's* why he spends all that time out at that remote ranch, and why he looks so addled and walleyed: He's plastered? Who says tha was a boil on his face? Who has a boil That's the mark of a falling-down drunk Granted, my hypothesis is based only o the fact that the notion fits so perfectl with the story as so far told. Why didn' anyone ever pursue the drinking thing Okay, he says, he stopped drinking. Has he ever had a drink since? How often has he driven while drunk? Does he consider himself an alcoholic? Aren't we mildly curious?

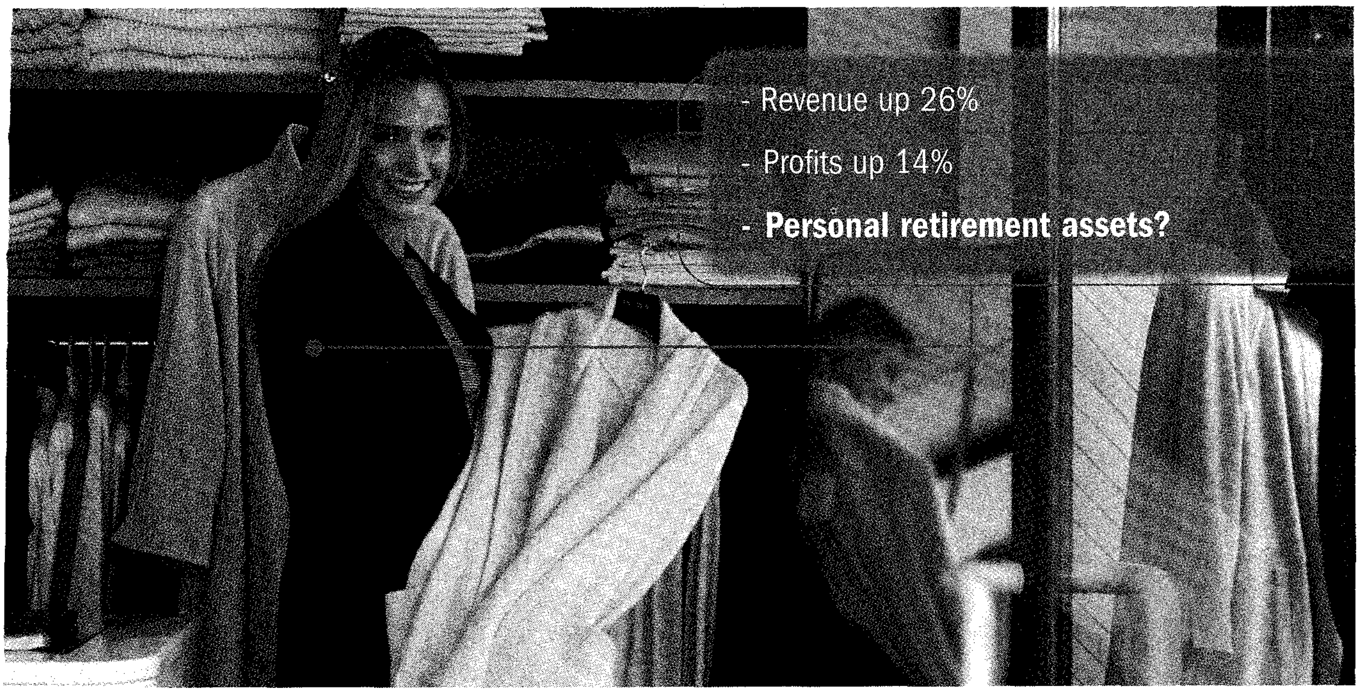
Politicians get the rumors they deserve.

The odd couple of Lucianne Goldberg and Ron Rosenbaum recently sniffed at (and helped smuggle into print) the rumor about Jeb Bush and Katherine Harris.

I first heard the rumor from someone at *Talk* magazine—now, it is possible, since after the *Talk* Election Night party at Elaine's, a group adjourned to Bill and Hillary's suite at the Grand Hyatt, that Bill or Hill started the rumor. Then I heard it confirmed by the former wife of a big-time political consultant who heard it from her junior-high daughter when she came back from a visit with her father. (So take that to the libel lawyers!)

Lucianne believes it must not be true because it has had no bump. No additional details. It doesn't pass her bona fides test—doesn't earn the Lucianne seal. Rosenbaum, a good egg, is upset because it is misogynistic—he defends not

Illustration by Scott Menchin. Original photographs: from left, Craig Litten/The Democrat/Corbis Sygma; Lou Toman/South Florida Sun-Sentinel/Corbis Sygma; Brooks Kraft/Corbis Sygma; Christy Bowe/Corbis Sygma.



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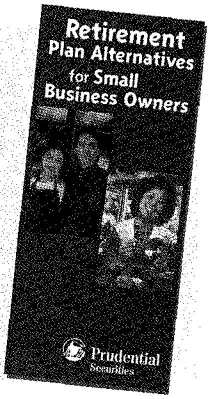

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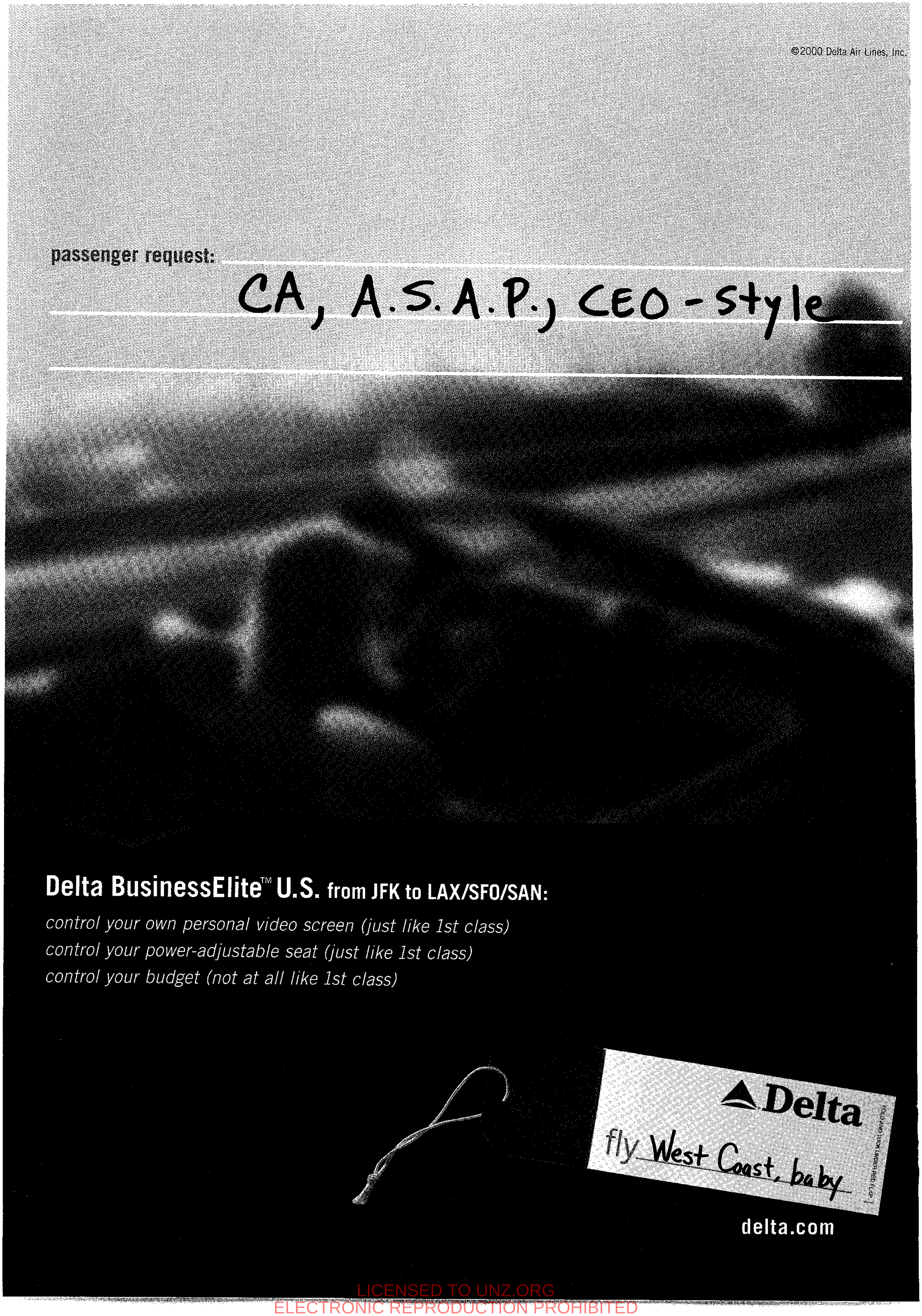

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ly Katherine Harris's honor but her akeup. What both ignore is that the uth is, in every which way but legally, relevant. If it is not true, it anyway lies the direction of truth. A good rumor a way to explain what is not being exained, a way to help figure out what's rong with this picture. And certainly ne would have to be mighty foolish to elieve it could not be true.

In the information swamp, you have trust your own instincts. And if you're ill unsure, the follow-up rumor has *ewsweek*'s babe-beat reporter, Michael ikoff, investigating the tale.

Then, of course, there are the Cuans. You can't have a modern political onspiracy theory without the Cubans. Iere the line goes from Jeb to Elián to he Cuban community to the Demoratic mayor, Alex Penelas, who may be he linchpin to the stolen election. The resence of the Cubans in this story uggests that the mythology of Election 2000 could fester and rise to grassynoll proportions.

There's even a Republican sense that **he tougher you are, the more respect ou get—**it's sports stuff. This is being played by nd for the professionals."

IT'S POSSIBLE WE DON'T HAVE ELECTIONS anymore; we have perceptions. What is certified in the end is a set of impressions, insights, and intuitions. A free-floating sense of optimism or dread.

The party-boy son, shoehorned into a Jesus-loves-me marriage (I'm surely not satisfied I know as much as I'll bet there is to know about George's first fiancée); set up in business (a baseball team! Maureen Dowd thinks George W. is like Sonny, but in many ways he's like Fredo Corleone, sent off to Vegas); nepo-ed into the statehouse, which is turned into a money-raising apparatus (politics is the only legitimate Ponzi scheme); and now strong-armed into the least desirable presidential victory in the history of presidential victories. In Dubya's defense, such a disreputable and picaresque bio could be provided for Bill Clinton—which, of course, contributed to his impeachment.

We may not need campaign reporters so much as some new form of literary criticism. We need reality critics.

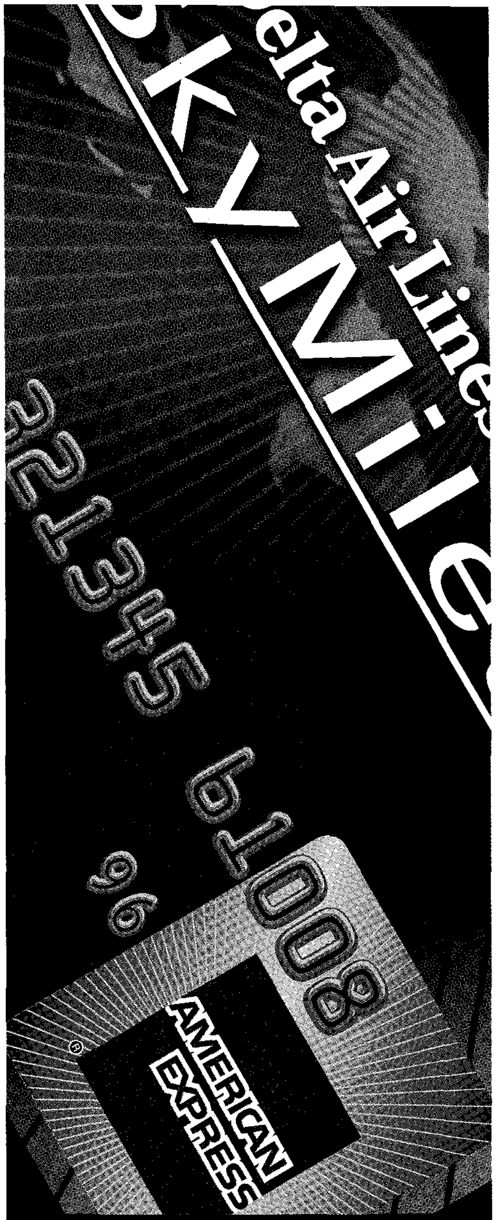
What are the underlying motivations? What are the unstated messages? What are the nuances of public character from which we can infer the actual living, breathing person (assuming that the person we see has little relevance to this actual person)?

Indeed, the most surprising thing to me, as a critic, if not a citizen, is that the story has gone this way. It would have been so simple to have created a plausible, sunny ending, to have George W. revealed as a decent, deserving-the-benefit-of-the-doubt kind of guy.

That is, he could have made an offer. Given that he lost in the general election (there's been a hurried agreement that the election itself is beside the point, that it's the Electoral College that is the basis of the democracy—it frightens people to admit to a systems breakdown), given the nonexistent margin and various disputes between the two in Florida, and, not least of all, given that his brother is the governor of the disputed state, he should have said, *Let's hand-recount everything.* Or even *Let's do a best-of-three machine recount.* Something that says *I'm willing to lose* (what happened to all that talk about George W. not *needing* to be president?). *I acknowledge that this is an anomalous situation. I'm not afraid, and hell, I really am a mensch.*

But just at the time this offer should have been made, W. was, as I figure it, stewed. (The other reason you might not make such an offer is that you thought there was a pretty good chance you'd lose. And after all, the guys who'd brought Bush this far weren't being paid to be thought well of, or have him thought well of—you take your revenge any way you get it, hot or cold.)

AT THE RISK OF BLAMING THE VICTIM, IT is interesting to wonder if there was something that Gore might have done, some line in the sand he might have drawn. Something like: *I have been elected president by an indisputable margin. George Bush is a pretender claiming victory on the basis of 500 votes in a state controlled by his brother. This is not an issue just for courts or legislatures. Everyone must draw his or her own reasonable conclusion about*



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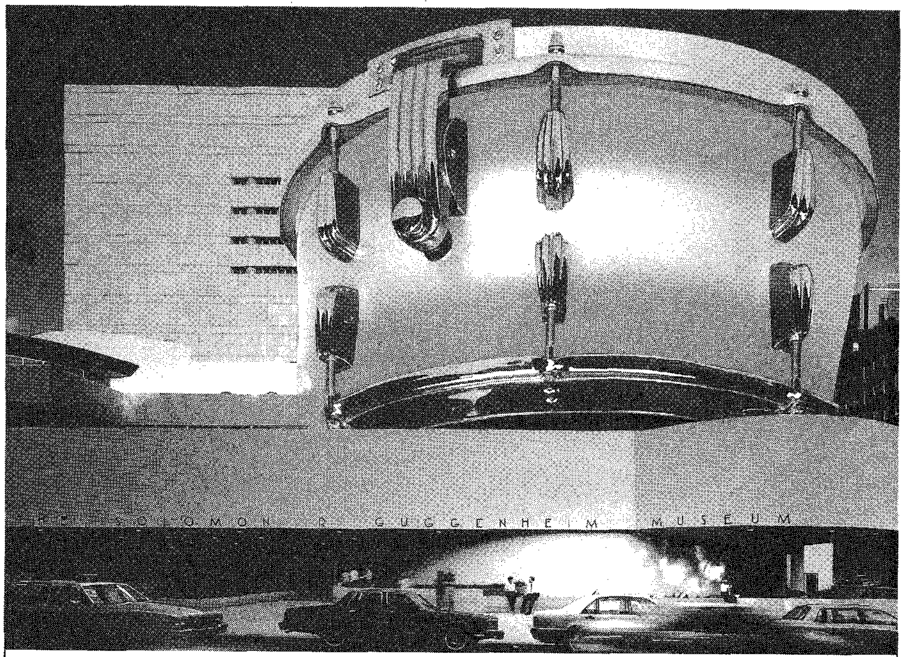

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who is the real president. (The actu ballots, as it happens, will be availab for inspection and a historical recou within two years.) This, howeve would have required him to do exac ly what he failed to do throughout th campaign. That is, to talk about (to b able to see) the large, emotiona moral view instead of turning every thing he says into something that pe ple couldn't care less about.

THERE HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN SOMETHIN fishy about George W. since the beginning. Which may be one reason th Bush guys don't find it imperative t disguise it now. If you could plausibl make a case for Bush before this, yo could as plausibly make the case tha he had won the election now.

A significant part of the Republica political approach has come to be tha Americans have a short media memory. The first Bush administration Newt, and impeachment are all unfortunate episodes in the media past. Th market has accounted for them an moved on. And the Republicans ma be right—when you have this stuf drummed into your head every night you build up an immunity. We get use to violence; we get used to political deceit and flat-footedness.

There's even a Republican sense that the tougher you are the more respect you get—it's sports stuff. This is being played by and for the professionals (they believe the election was stolen from them eight years ago, and, fuck it, they're grabbing it back now).

But I wonder if you ever shake the joke—you get to be president, but we have no illusions about you at all.

Truculent Cheney, the go-to man, on his fourth heart attack (what office pools are forming here?) . . . Baker, the dark prince, grown gray and dusty, sputtering like the Potter figure from *It's a Wonderful Life* . . . George W. himself, the ultimate put-up job (who is really in charge here? When do we find out? Do we ever?) . . . plus every other mothballed guy from the Poppy years . . . black-bag boys one and all.

Or maybe the real joke is that having successfully carried out their nefarious plot, having gotten back where they ignominiously had to leave off, they are going to find out that eight years makes a big difference (or not, and we just replay Saddam Hussein and recession). You can't go home again and all that.

But do we care much?

Naw. ■

E-mail: michael@burnrate.com

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Simon Dumenco ADVERTISING

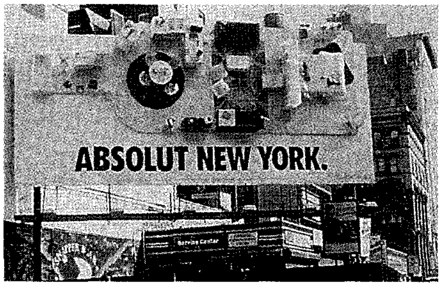
Keyword: Sell

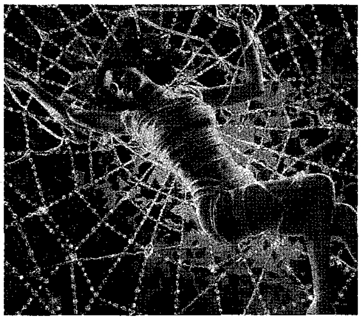
From Benetton's quickly dispatched death-row musings to VW's lingering moonlit sonata on young love, the worst—and the best—in the year's advertising.

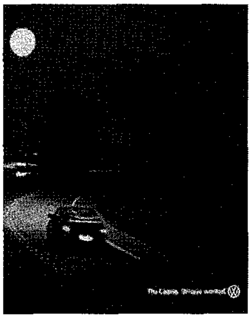
THE YEAR'S DEFINING MOMENT IN ADVERtising? That millisecond flash of the word RATS in a fall anti-Gore ad brought to you by the snakes at the Republican National Committee. Remember the outrage? The Democrats cried "subliminal advertising!" but Republicans said it was merely fancy animated typography—a "visual drumbeat" wherein the phrase BUREAUCRATS DECIDE bounced around the screen erratically, with the word segment RATS appearing momentarily just by happenstance. Besides, the Republicans pointed out, in the same spot the phrase INTERFERE WITH DOCTORS bounced around, too, with the frame alighting similarly on the word segment WIT. "The Democrats don't suggest we're trying to send a subliminal message that Al Gore is a funny guy, do they?" said the Republican Party chairman at the time.

Ha ha ha, not funny. But who knew that one spot would end up accurately presaging our year-end obsession with maddening minutiae and hair-splitting? ("One thirtieth of a second of RATS counts!" "Oh, yeah? Well then, WIT should count, too!") God really is in the details. But so's the devil.

CONSIDER THE ENTIRE YEAR IN ADVERTISing, and you've got to admit that overall, ads got better—or at least less abusive—toward the end of the year. Think about it: The most appalling advertising effort of the year came right up front: the **United Colors of Benetton** "We, on Death Row" ad booklet supplement to the January issue of *Talk* magazine. Remember that political-correctness-run-amok folly? Benetton's creative director at the time, Oliviero Toscani, thought it would be a swell idea to print full-page pinups and in-depth interviews with inmates awaiting execution in an attempt to raise consciousness about the death penalty and, at the same time, boost awareness of Benetton's multi-culti clothing brand. To no one's surprise, except perhaps Toscani's, the families of the victims of these murderers had no sympathy for jailhouse pronouncements (printed in large type) such as "It's hard to keep on hoping every day," and "I think people like seeing other people suffer and killed."







Spots on: Clockwise from top, recent ads for Absolut/Ikea, Volkswagen, MTV's Video Music Awards, H&M, and, center, Diamond.com.

Advertising also generally improved toward the end of year, of course, simply because of the demise of the dot-coms an their pointless, abrasive, omnipresent attempts at branding. Last January, sixtee Internet companies placed ads on the Super Bowl (compared with next month likely two or three), including **E*Trade** unfortunate dancing-chimpanzee spo (from **Goodby, Silverstein & Partners**) which ended with the tag line "Well, w just wasted 2 million bucks. What are you doing with your money?" A genre-defining moment if there ever was one.

Still, a moment of silence, please, fo the sassy, dearly departed **Pets.com** Sock Puppet (in spots created by **TBWA\Chiat\Day**), the year's most entertaining and endearing—if unoriginal—brand mascot. (In an embarrassingly frivolous lawsuit, the now-defunct Pets.com sued comic genius Robert Smigel because *his* competing creation, foul-mouthed Triumph the Insult Comic Dog of *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*, was seen as somehow demeaning to the entire canine-hand-puppet community, even though Triumph was around long before Sock.)

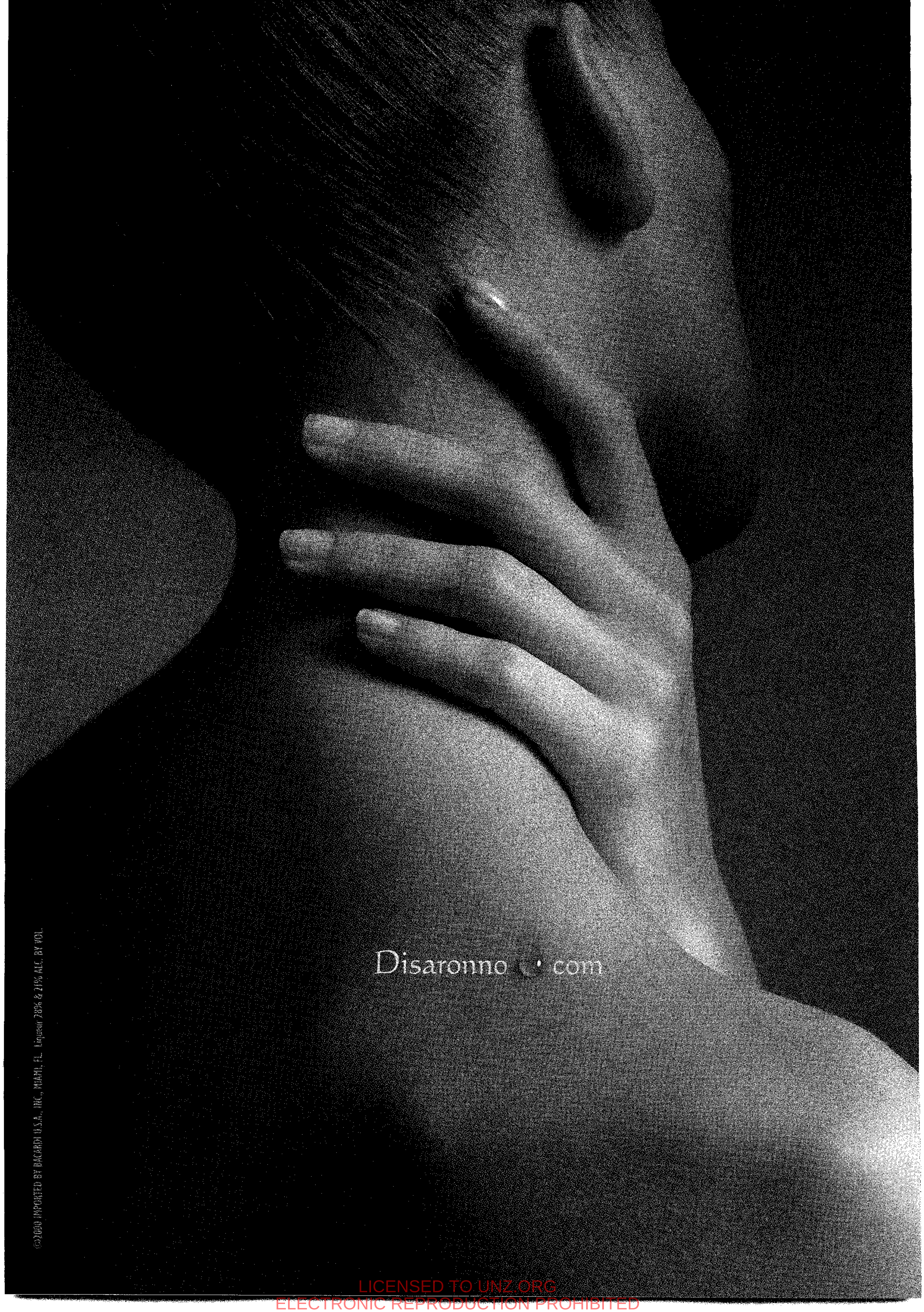
But never mind the dot-coms. The Good Riddance Award should really go to all those ads inspired by the whole *Survivor* juggernaut. The exception: **Reebok**'s hilarious nature-trail ad (created by **Berlin, Cameron & Partners**), wherein a hapless male hiker is obliged to suck snake venom from his buddy's general upper-thigh region (his pants half down because he'd just taken a leak), prompting a double take from a passing female jogger. "Perhaps Madison Avenue's first attempt at a gay-oral-sex hard-sell," *Entertainment Weekly* observed.

BVLGARI

CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN JEWELLERS

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR WOMEN.

AVAILABLE AT BVLGARI - BLOOMINGDALE'S - LORD & TAYLOR


Disaronno • com
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tertainment Weekly observed.

The other funniest ads of the year? **utsch**'s endearingly idiotic guys-in- it-costume spots narrated by **Snap-** e's "Director of Fruit Relations," who scoursed on how the beverage-maker eps good fruits from going bad. hey're enrolled in a Snapple-run re- rm school, where they engage in olesome activities, including calis- enics and listening to bedtime stories their bunk beds.) And those *Monty thon*-esque **Kellogg's Rice Krispies eats** spots (created by the **Leo Burnett** ency), showing strange men making en stranger use of the snacks: One fat y, for instance, fashions a floating olmate-girlfriend entirely of Treats ragedy ensues when his dog takes a liking to her, too). Tag line: "Rice Krispies reats. Best when eaten." Indeed.

The quietest genius on display in advertising came
the form of Arnold Communications' chill-inducing
Milky Way' ad for the Volkswagen Cabrio,
he year's most perfectly executed spot."

Supermodel Laetitia Casta and su- ersize model Anna Nicole Smith both lid double duty as pitchwomen and ightning rods. Casta's brilliantly art-di- ected **Diamond.com** ad (she's caught, aked, in a diamond-studded web, the trands of which strategically cover not nuch more than her nipples) and Smith's bosom-baring **Lane Bryant** ad were—thank you, boys!—both banned y the *Wall Street Journal* for being too racy, which gave both campaigns instant, widespread notoriety. But both women ended up taking Manhattan, towering over Times Square in traffic-stopping billboards.

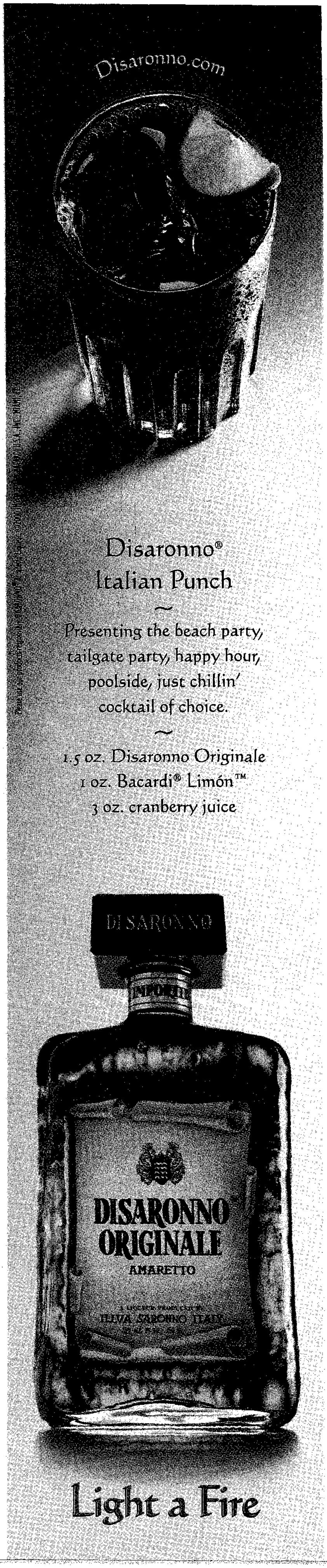
In the New York outdoor-advertising arena, continuing plaudits are due **Target** and **Evian** (both of which made last year's "Best Of" column, too) for their cleverly executed street posters, transit signage, and billboards. Who knew Target could milk another year's worth of admiring attention by obsessively emblazoning its simple bull's-eye logo on the clothing of twentysomethings, their furniture, cars, and housewares, and even a bulldog? It's a clever commentary on the folly of chasing after pricey designer labels, which suddenly seems all the more on-point given the current economic climate. Evian, meanwhile, wowed with its building-size igloo (it's made of Evian!) and mermaid (she's swimming in it!) billboards, ads that winkingly celebrated our culture's propensity for self-congratulatory coddling.

For the self-pitying and envy-prone, **Absolut** and **Ikea** teamed up to post a life-size, three-dimensional studio apartment on a billboard—headlined ABSOLUT NEW YORK—at the corner of Lafayette and Bond streets, complete with actual Ikea furniture (a bed, dresser, couch, chaise, etc., plus a full bathroom and a working TV) bolted right on to it. Sun-filled, airy, grt vus, fully furn., grt loc.!

They suffered from being totally overexposed, but those terrific **Budweiser** "Whassup?!" ads—which actually debuted late last year but really only began to blow up in the spring—undeniably transformed the advertising landscape. By April, the Washington *Post* had declared the campaign a bona fide "cultural phenomenon." Bud's agency, **DDB Chicago**, deserves major credit for working with 33-year-old director Charles Stone III to create some very entertaining variations on the original spot, including the witty "Wasabi?!" spot set at a Japanese restaurant.

THE QUIETEST GENIUS ON DISPLAY IN ADvertising came in the form of **Arnold Communications**' chill-inducing "Milky Way" ad for the **Volkswagen Cabrio**, the year's most perfectly executed spot. Two teenage couples in a Cabrio glide under a starry sky to the lulling, acoustic soundtrack of Nick Drake's "Pink Moon." They arrive at their destination—an unseemly frat-type bash pouring out of a brightly lit house—and, exchanging knowing glances, decide to just keep driving. As Smith Galtney wrote in a *GQ* music column, the spot "presents an epiphany that any person who has lived past the age of 19 has experienced: the euphoric moment when you finally understand that being out of sync with the in crowd isn't going to kill you; in fact, you might even be a better person because of it."

VW also scored with its continuing series of incandescent, effervescent **New Beetle** spots (also created by Arnold Communications), aesthetic brethren of **Apple**'s stellar **iMac** commercials (from **TBWA\Chiat\Day**). In both campaigns, the zippy little prod-



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1 oz. Bacardi® Limón™
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Steel Bangle Watch,
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GEORG JENSEN
OUTRAGEOUSLY SCANDINAVIAN SINCE 1904

683 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 212 759 6457
The Mall at Short Hills, New Jersey 973 379 2822

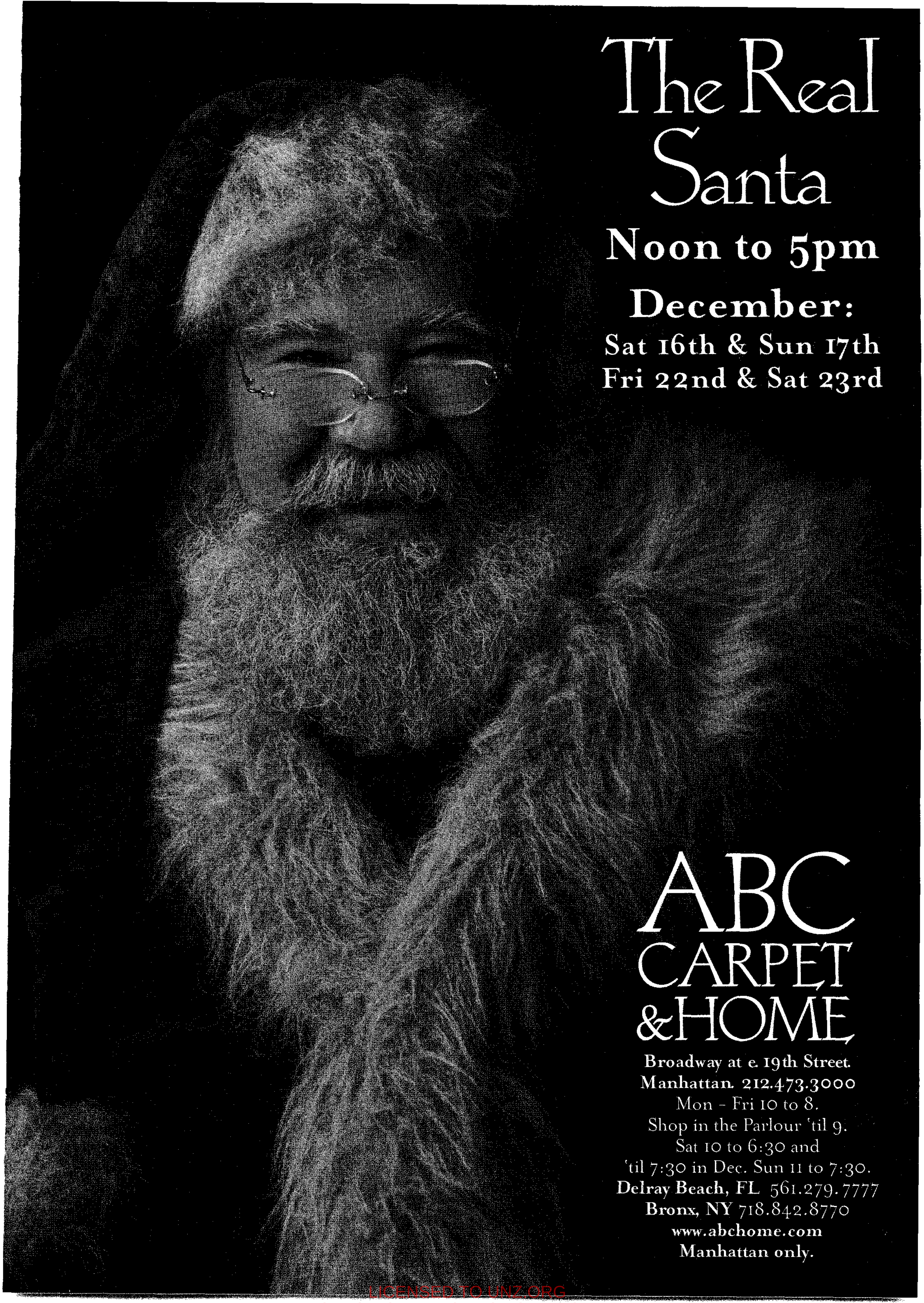
ucts were showcased—usually spi ning around hyperactively—again blinding white backgrounds, the be ter to show off their curvy charm Part talent show, part beauty pagean these commercials were little beacon of visual joy, striking just the right ba ance between sophisticated art direc tion and cheeky playfulness.

Just as expertly executed were **BBDO** breathtaking **Mountain Dew** spots, pa ticularly one starring a cast of gold lamé-clad skaters and bikers in an exu berantly choreographed display of ath letic prowess. A steroidal Busb Berkeley musical, tailor-made for MTV truncated attention spans. Speaking c **MTV** (which mostly develops its adver tising in-house), there is no entertain ment brand anywhere with a more mas terful, pitch-perfect grasp of how t market itself to its audience. MTV's pro mos for its own programming—partic ularly its fall Video Music Awards prin ads, starring Britney Spears as a white trash sidewalk vendor and the boys o 'N Sync as improbably butch construc tion workers—invariably dazzled with their puckish sensibility and cheerfully deranged worldview.

Among fashion retailers, Ikea-meets-the-Gap Swedish chain **H&M** did the best job of deploying slightly off-kilter celebrities to generate an edgy buzz for its brand. Blanketing the city with phone-booth ads (created in-house) starring Benicio Del Toro and Chloë Sevigny, H&M briefly duped every indie-film-loving Manhattanite into thinking itchy, disposable, unwearable clothing was a bargain just because it was cheap.

Calvin Klein, meanwhile, expanded on last year's perfectly cast series of young-celebs-on-the-verge portraits by signing up a new crop of cuties like *Saturday Night Live*'s Jimmy Fallon and actors Chris Klein (no relation) and Vanessa Shaw. But this year Calvin added a creepy visual subtext: perplexingly barren landscapes depicted in the midst of heaving Armageddon. In the ads, Chris Klein doesn't seem to mind that he's about to be consumed by a fireball, and Shaw seems entirely indifferent to the fact that the minimal flesh on her bones will soon be flambéed in a tide of molten lava. (What imminent calamity did Klein mean to suggest? A coming recession? A Bush presidency? *Survivor II* without Richard Hatch?)

Leave it to Calvin to preemptively channel the Zeitgeist, as always, in his advertising: All hell is breaking loose, but nobody seems to care. ■



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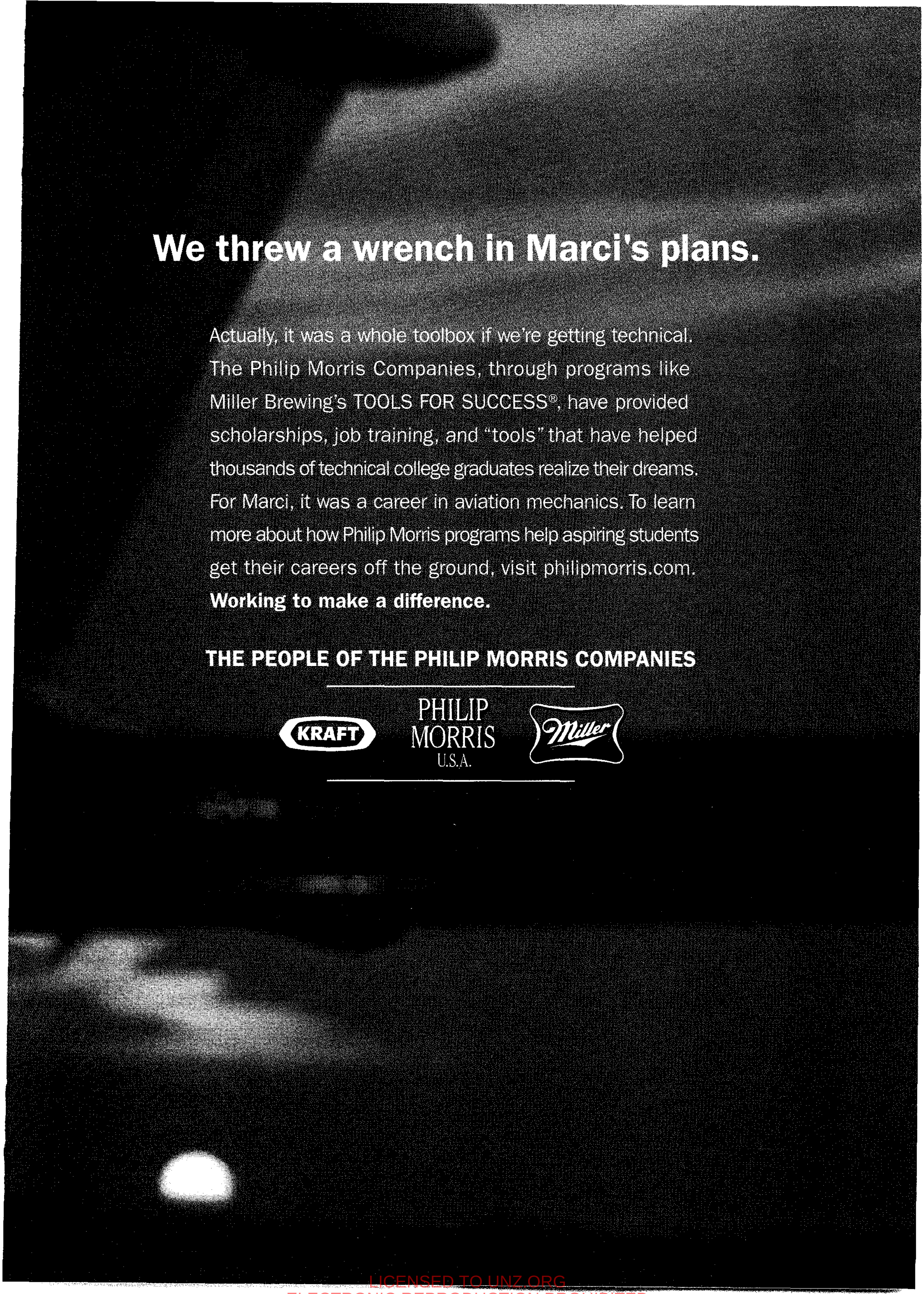


We threw a wrench in Marci's plans.

Actually, it was a whole toolbox if we're getting technical. The Philip Morris Companies, through programs like Miller Brewing's TOOLS FOR SUCCESS®, have provided scholarships, job training, and "tools" that have helped thousands of technical college graduates realize their dreams. For Marci, it was a career in aviation mechanics. To learn more about how Philip Morris programs help aspiring students get their careers off the ground, visit philipmorris.com. **Working to make a difference.**

THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIP MORRIS COMPANIES

KRAFT PHILIP MORRIS U.S.A. Miller

NEW YORK 2000 AWARDS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NIGEL PARRY

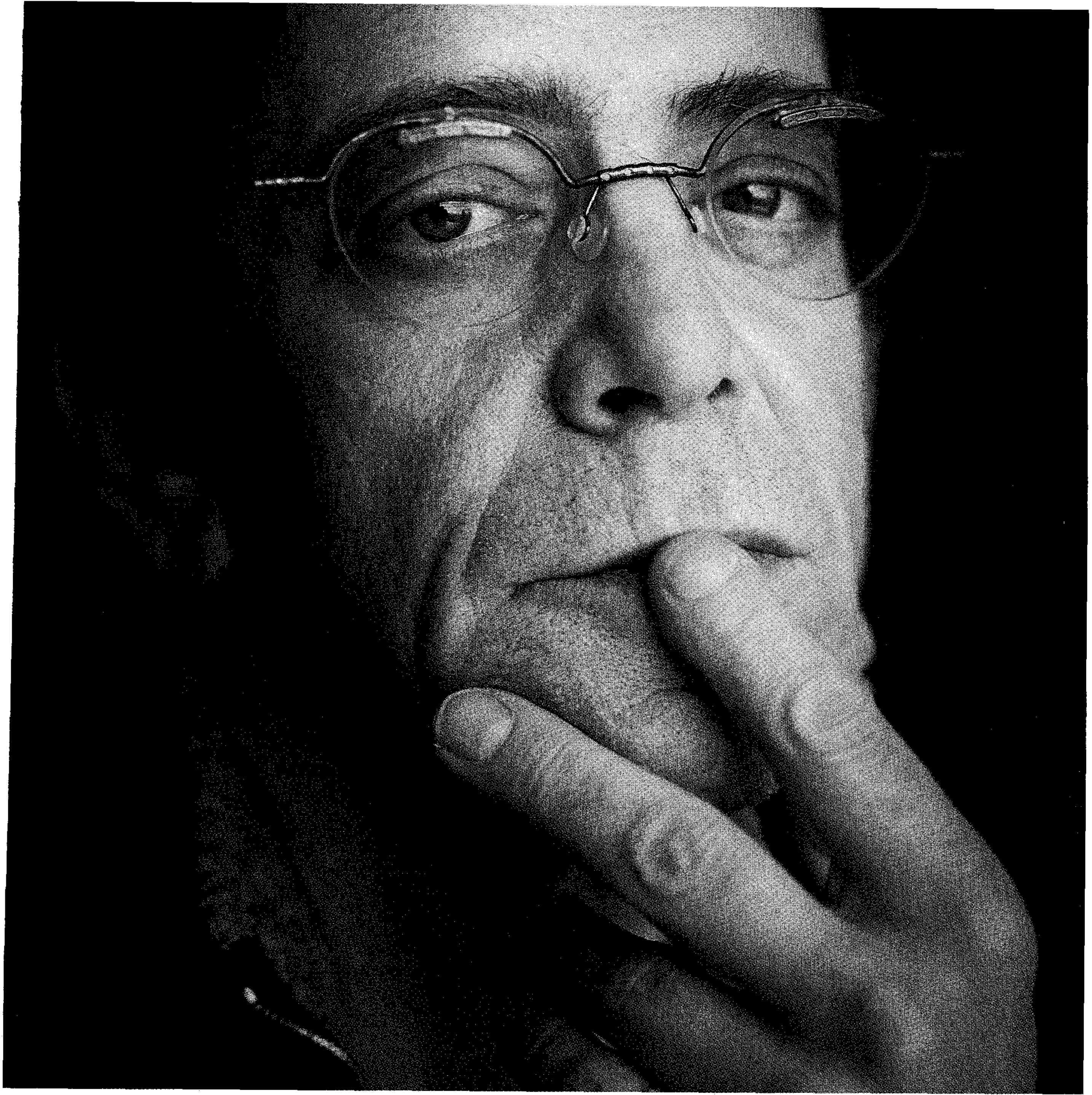
Coming up with the winners of our annual New York Awards is not as simple as, say, tallying votes. It's a matter of art, not absolutes, and it requires that the selectors use their discretion. Which is not to suggest that the process isn't foolproof. Whether for comedy (*Saturday Night Live*'s Jimmy Fallon) or for community service (Brad Lander) or for Lifetime Achievement (that other great communicator, Regis Philbin), our awards celebrate the dream of making it in the big city—and changing the city in the process. And when that happens, wherever it happens, however it happens, it's absolutely unmistakable. Case closed.

Mary-Louise Parker

Catherine, the woman she plays on Broadway in David Auburn's *Proof,* spends a lot of time on the back porch talking with her beloved, albeit deceased, father. But it's Mary-Louise who haunts the Walter Kerr Theatre with her feral, fragile portrait of a character she seems to live in as edgily, and as completely, as the home Catherine is about to lose. Parker's sly, fearless sexuality, her off-kilter way around a joke, are qualities she's brought to every role she's played, on Broadway (*Prelude to a Kiss*) and Off (*How I Learned to Drive*). And they're the stamp of an actress for whom stage work isn't slumming, for she is that rarest of talents, an actress who has made a life in the theater—*our* theater, in *our* city.

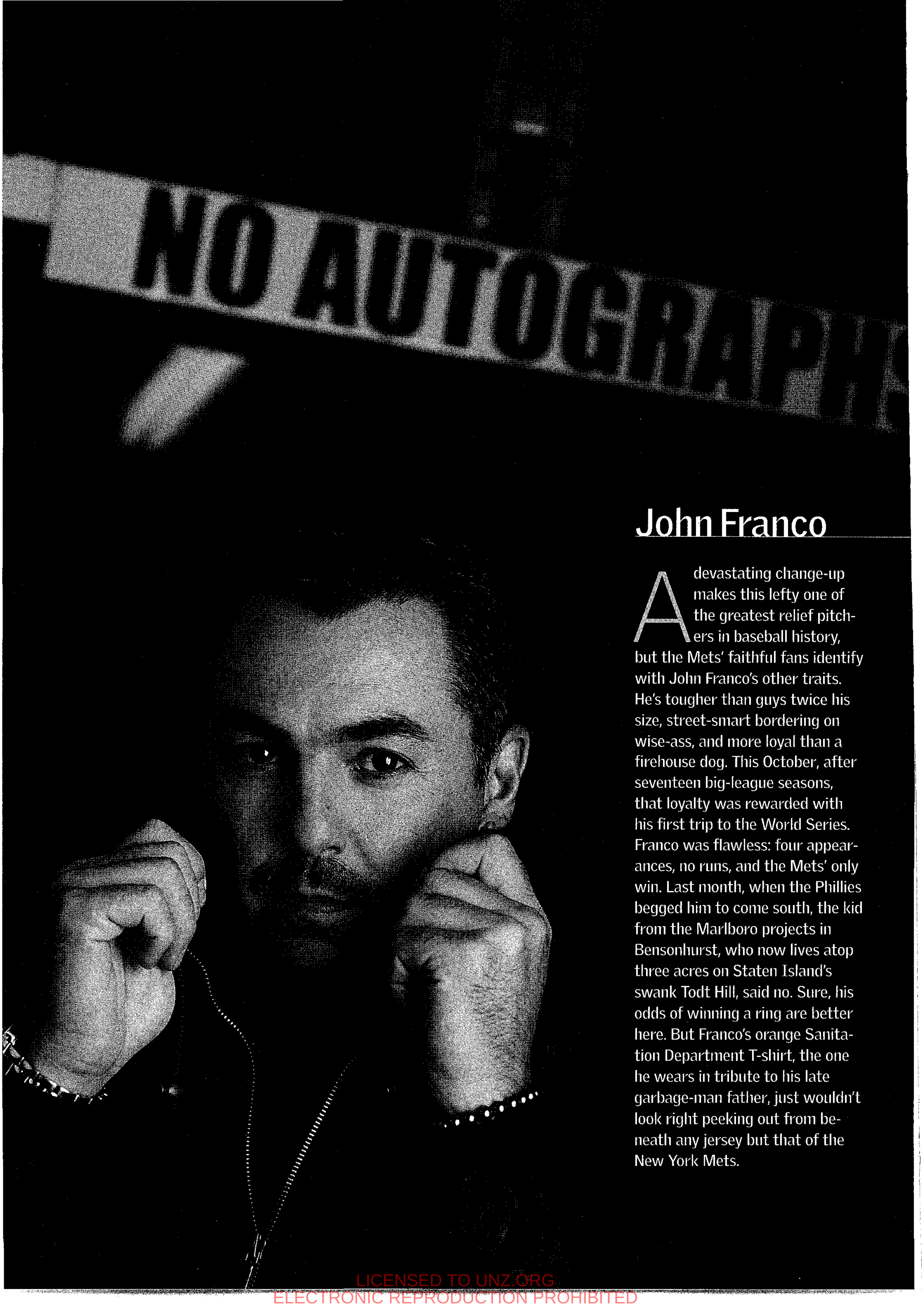
Darien Dash

When Darien Dash launched his company in 1994, his capital was as modest—$200—as his goals were ambitious: to bridge the digital divide. Expanding Internet access to the black and Hispanic communities, Digital Mafia Entertainment Interactive Holdings (DME) became the first publicly traded African-American-owned Internet company. After clients like VISA and HBO came calling, the Bronx-born, New Jersey–raised 29-year-old decided to give back to the community: As the technology chair of a Harlem school district, he gave thousands of students access to computers. This year, his efforts were recognized by Bill Clinton, who chose Dash to accompany him on his third "New Markets" tour to strategize ways to make the information superhighway available to everyone.



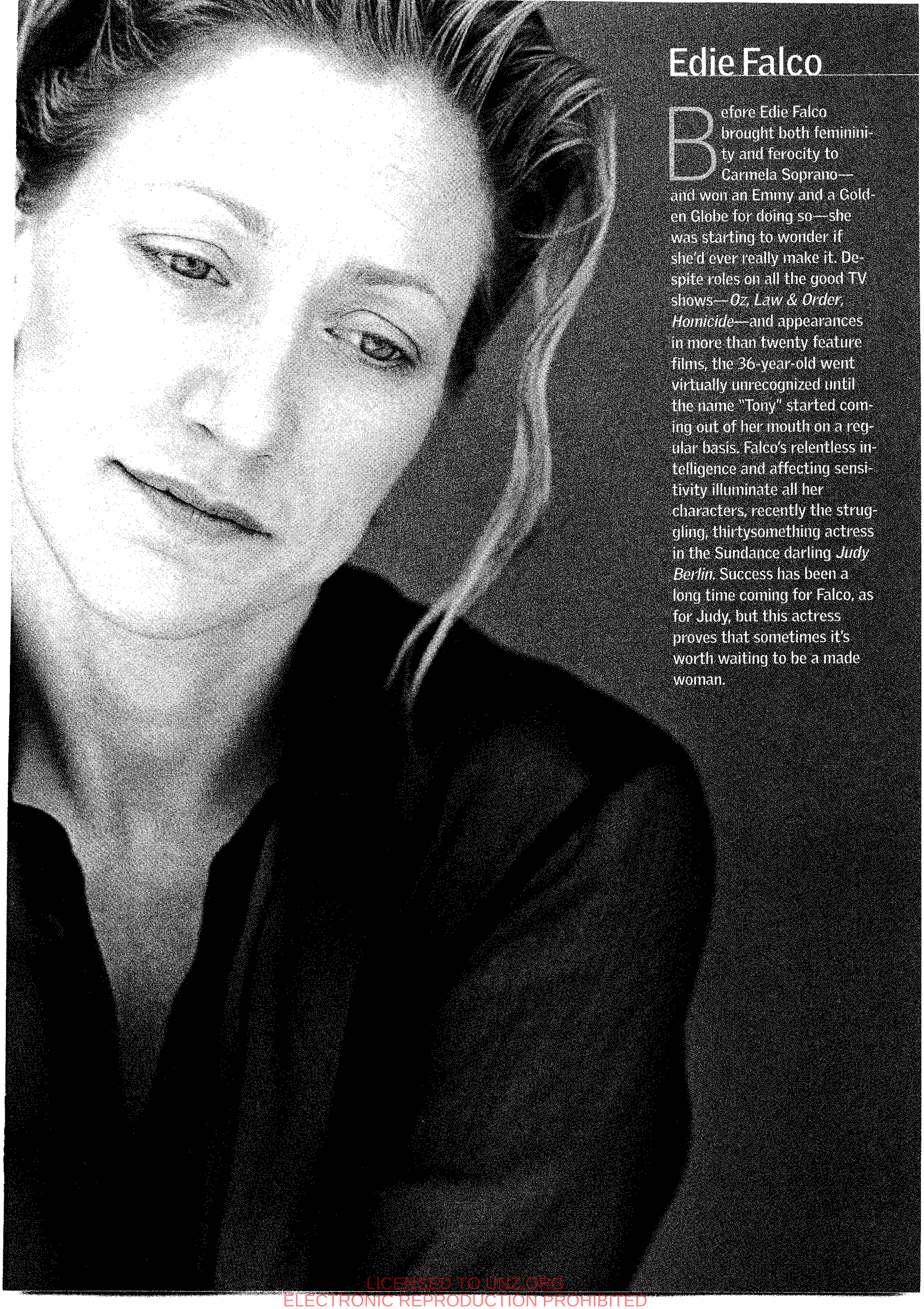
Lou Reed

By the end of the sixties, rock and roll was clearly here to stay, but a lot of it was still about peace, love, and going to San Francisco with a flower in your hair. Which is fine if you live in California. Lou Reed has spent more than three decades bringing rock a New York sensibility—literate, gritty, and painfully intense—and like the city itself, he shows no sign of slowing down. In February, he published *Pass Thru Fire: The Collected Lyrics,* putting a hard cover on one of rock's few bodies of work truly deserving of that permanence. In April, he released *Ecstasy,* an album as powerfully self-revealing and nuanced as any he's ever made. Much of the rest of the year he spent on the road, mixing the confessional and the confrontational as only a true New Yorker can.



John Franco

A devastating change-up makes this lefty one of the greatest relief pitchers in baseball history, but the Mets' faithful fans identify with John Franco's other traits. He's tougher than guys twice his size, street-smart bordering on wise-ass, and more loyal than a firehouse dog. This October, after seventeen big-league seasons, that loyalty was rewarded with his first trip to the World Series. Franco was flawless: four appearances, no runs, and the Mets' only win. Last month, when the Phillies begged him to come south, the kid from the Marlboro projects in Bensonhurst, who now lives atop three acres on Staten Island's swank Todt Hill, said no. Sure, his odds of winning a ring are better here. But Franco's orange Sanitation Department T-shirt, the one he wears in tribute to his late garbage-man father, just wouldn't look right peeking out from beneath any jersey but that of the New York Mets.

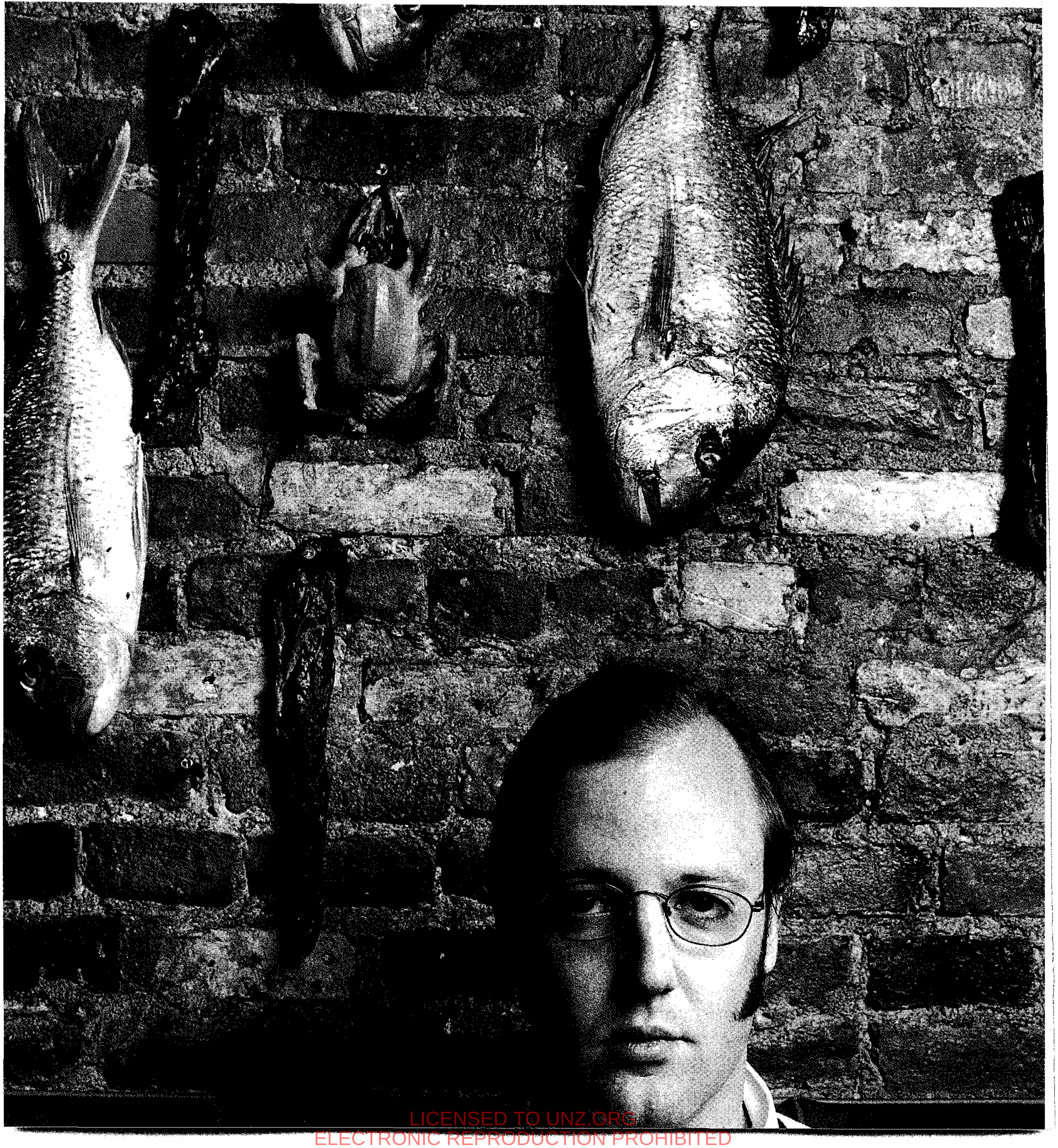


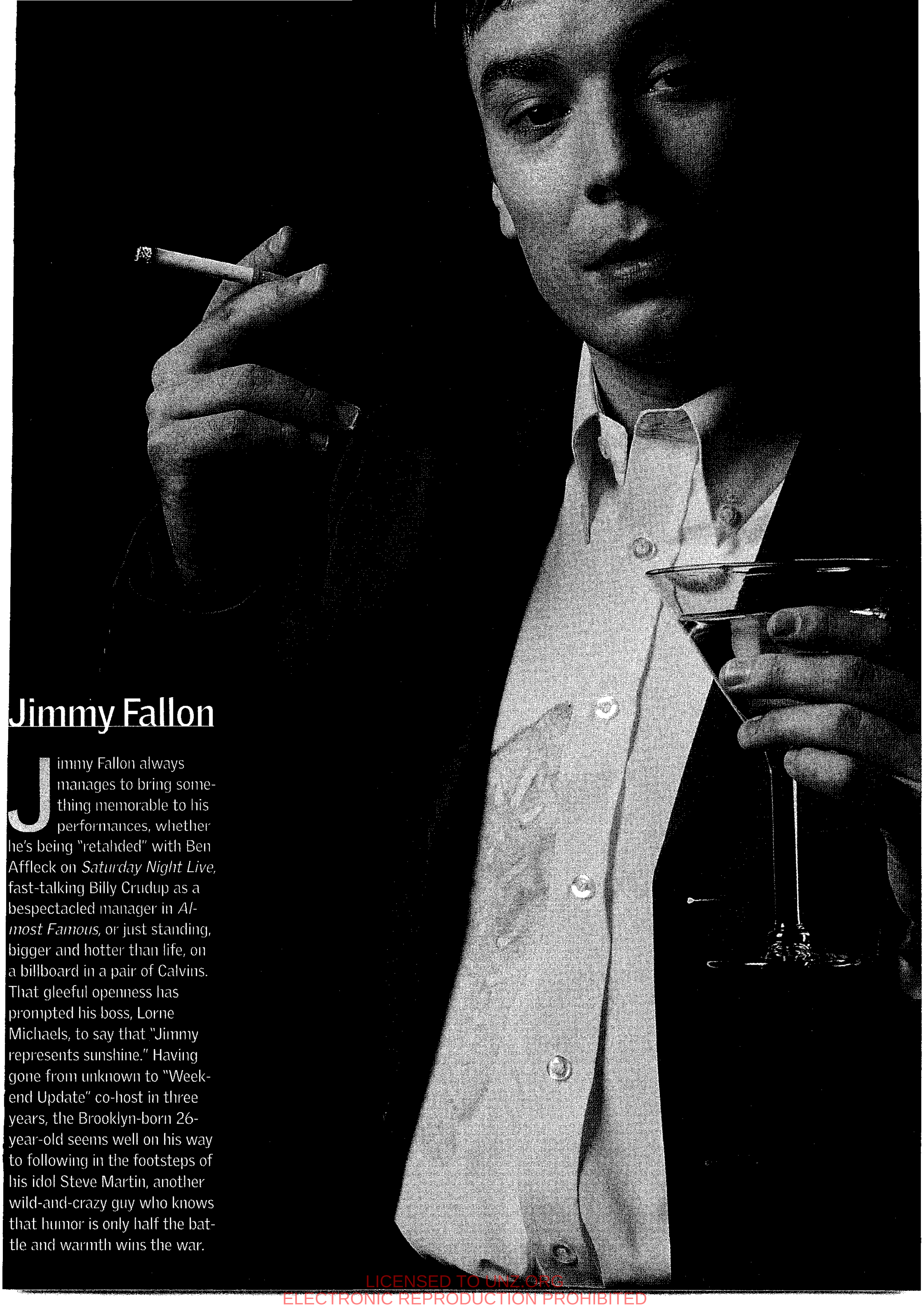
Edie Falco

Before Edie Falco brought both femininity and ferocity to Carmela Soprano—and won an Emmy and a Golden Globe for doing so—she was starting to wonder if she'd ever really make it. Despite roles on all the good TV shows—*Oz, Law & Order, Homicide*—and appearances in more than twenty feature films, the 36-year-old went virtually unrecognized until the name "Tony" started coming out of her mouth on a regular basis. Falco's relentless intelligence and affecting sensitivity illuminate all her characters, recently the struggling, thirtysomething actress in the Sundance darling *Judy Berlin*. Success has been a long time coming for Falco, as for Judy, but this actress proves that sometimes it's worth waiting to be a made woman.

Wylie Dufresne

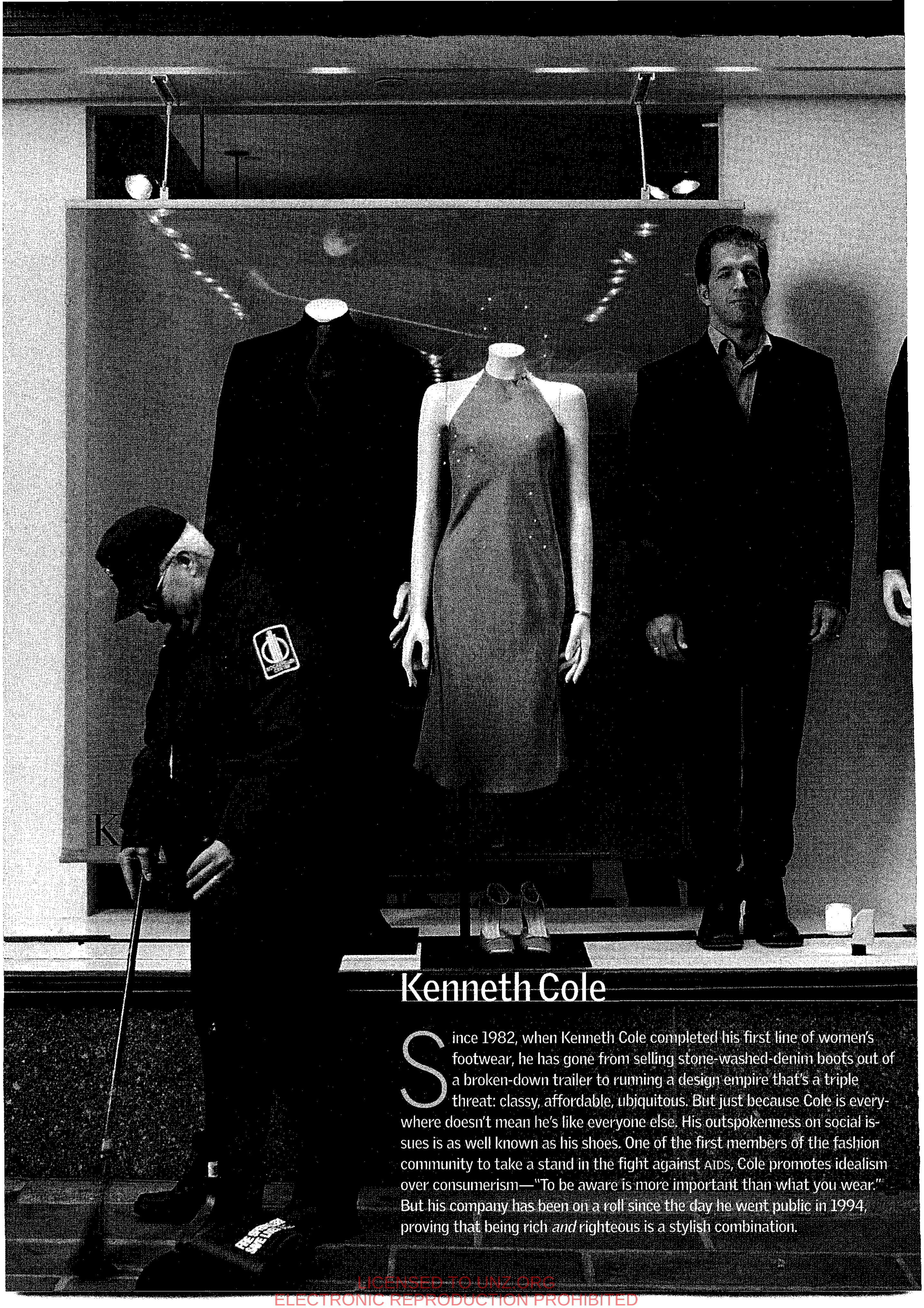
Though a new restaurant opens nearly every day in millennial New York—311 Zagat-worthy chefs stepped up last year alone—none has commandeered the food fanatic's imagination as surely as Wylie Dufresne's 71 Clinton Fresh Food. Why? Because Dufresne—despite training with that most cosmopolitan of New York chefs, Jean-Georges Vongerichten—hasn't opened a "New York" restaurant at all. Following the example of brash young Parisian cooks who decamp to remote arrondissements and forge their reputations in tiny, uncompromising dining rooms, Dufresne planted his flag in the Lower East Side hinterlands and watched the foodies rally around him. His restaurant's name tells the story: an out-of-the-way address and the promise of seasonal ingredients exploding with simple, unforgettably intense flavors in illuminating combinations. As more restaurants open, his idea seems even fresher.





Jimmy Fallon

Jimmy Fallon always manages to bring something memorable to his performances, whether he's being "retahded" with Ben Affleck on *Saturday Night Live,* fast-talking Billy Crudup as a bespectacled manager in *Almost Famous,* or just standing, bigger and hotter than life, on a billboard in a pair of Calvins. That gleeful openness has prompted his boss, Lorne Michaels, to say that "Jimmy represents sunshine." Having gone from unknown to "Weekend Update" co-host in three years, the Brooklyn-born 26-year-old seems well on his way to following in the footsteps of his idol Steve Martin, another wild-and-crazy guy who knows that humor is only half the battle and warmth wins the war.



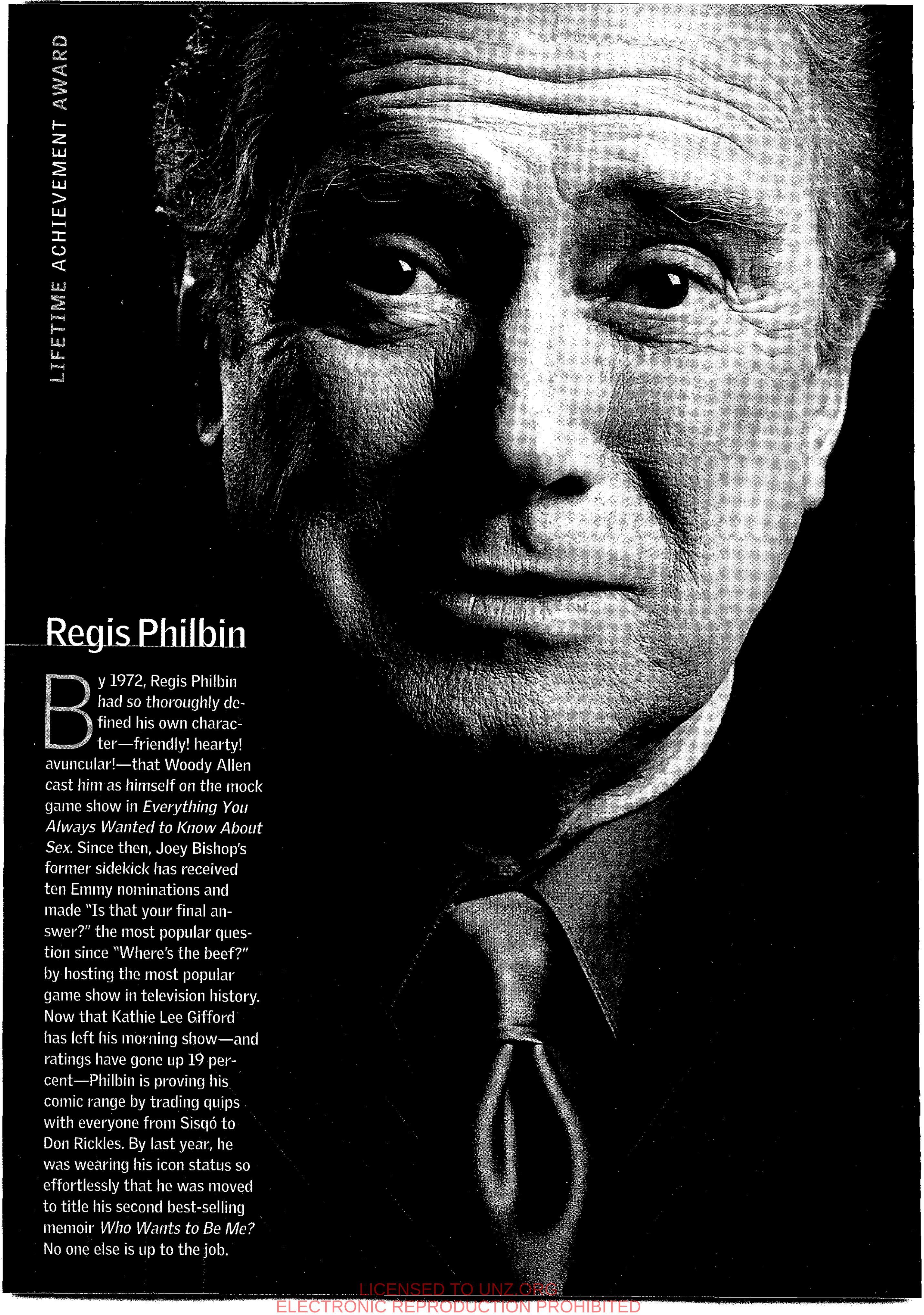
Kenneth Cole

Since 1982, when Kenneth Cole completed his first line of women's footwear, he has gone from selling stone-washed-denim boots out of a broken-down trailer to running a design empire that's a triple threat: classy, affordable, ubiquitous. But just because Cole is everywhere doesn't mean he's like everyone else. His outspokenness on social issues is as well known as his shoes. One of the first members of the fashion community to take a stand in the fight against AIDS, Cole promotes idealism over consumerism—"To be aware is more important than what you wear." But his company has been on a roll since the day he went public in 1994, proving that being rich *and* righteous is a stylish combination.

Brad Lander

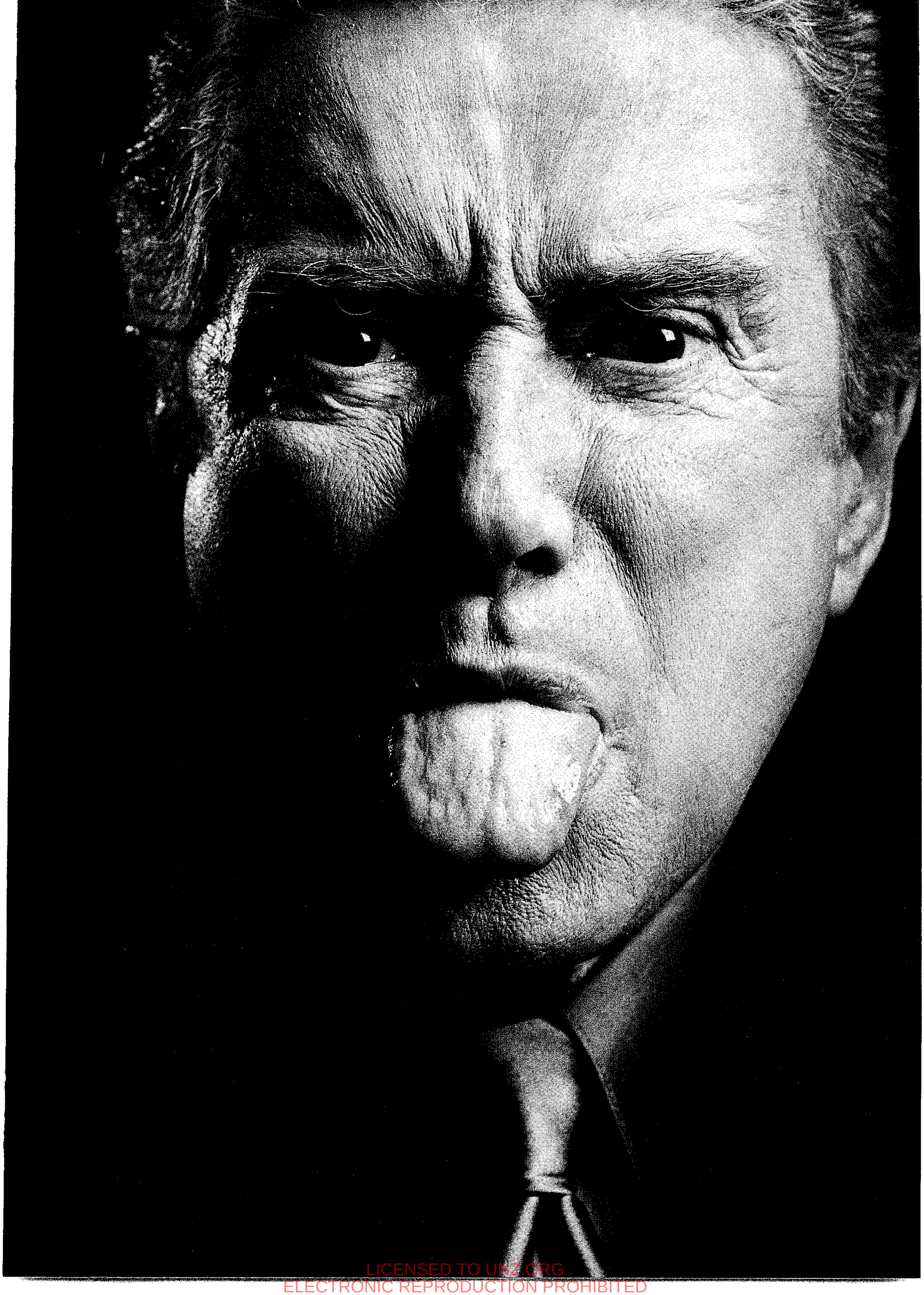
If you want to know what Brad Lander is up against, step outside the office of the Fifth Avenue Committee and stroll down its namesake thoroughfare, considered "fringe" Park Slope only a few short years ago. Swanky bistros like Vaux and Al Di Là have sprung up alongside hip clothing boutiques—delightful for the incoming waves of moneyed Manhattanites, less so for longtime working-class residents suddenly faced with $1,800 rents. That's where Lander and the FAC come in, working to minimize gentrification's collateral damage. Under Lander's direction since 1993, the FAC has fought to keep low-income and elderly tenants in their homes, developed more than 300 units of affordable housing, founded small businesses like the Ecomat laundromat, and provided job training for local residents. At a time when everyone's watching the bottom line, his passion for affordable housing is every bit as bullish as the local real-estate market.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Regis Philbin

By 1972, Regis Philbin had so thoroughly defined his own character—friendly! hearty! avuncular!—that Woody Allen cast him as himself on the mock game show in *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex.* Since then, Joey Bishop's former sidekick has received ten Emmy nominations and made "Is that your final answer?" the most popular question since "Where's the beef?" by hosting the most popular game show in television history. Now that Kathie Lee Gifford has left his morning show—and ratings have gone up 19 percent—Philbin is proving his comic range by trading quips with everyone from Sisqó to Don Rickles. By last year, he was wearing his icon status so effortlessly that he was moved to title his second best-selling memoir *Who Wants to Be Me?* No one else is up to the job.



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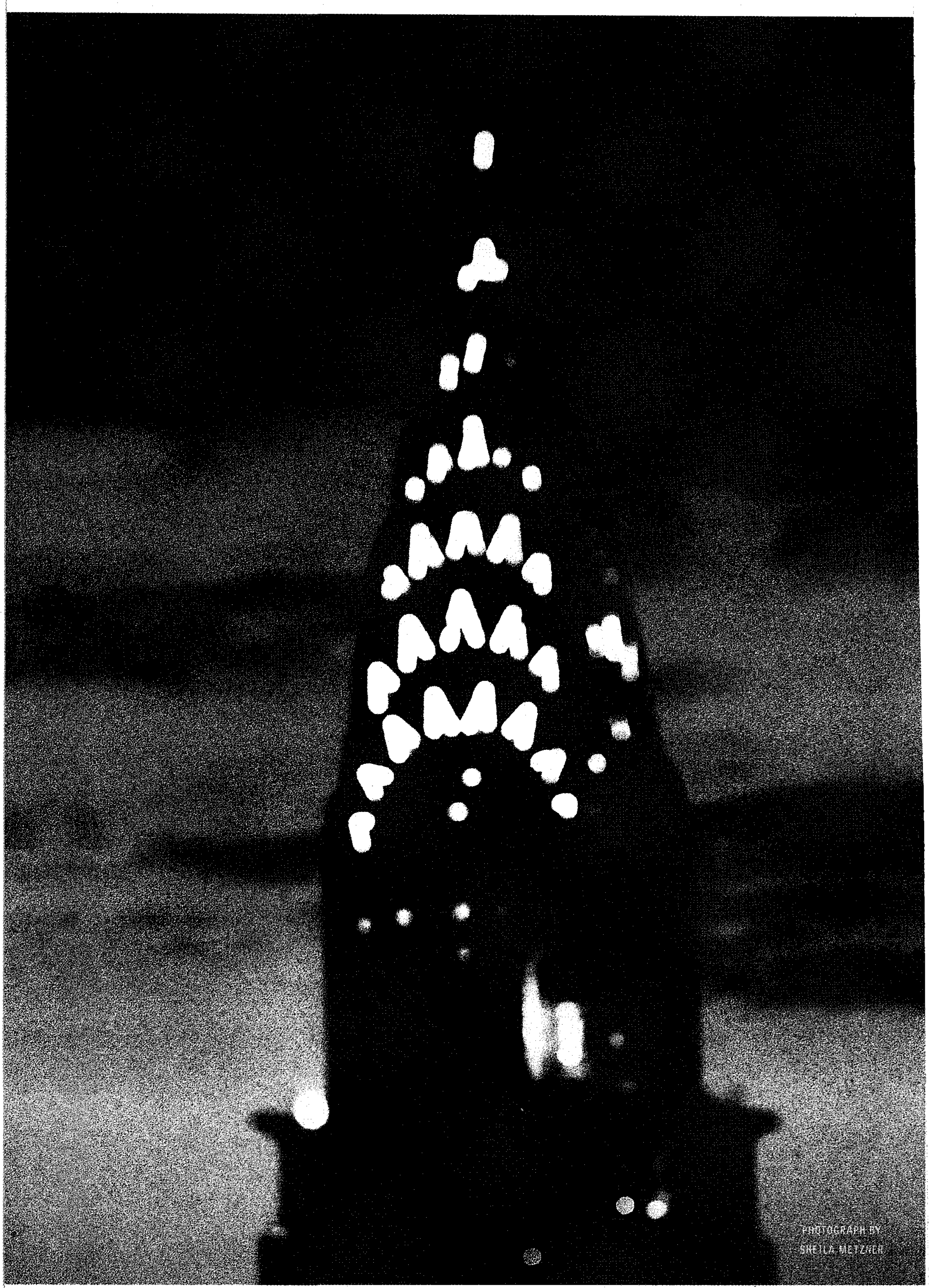
MY NEW YORK

PLACES THAT CHANGED US

There's the city of guidebooks, of subway maps and cross streets; and then there's the city where we blazed our own trails, made our own history. On the following pages, you'll find the city as lived by more than 50 New Yorkers. In many cases, you'll find it a strange new world—or one that you know like the back of your hand.



PHOTOGRAPH BY
SHEILA METZNER

From *New York 2000,* courtesy John Stevenson Gallery.

arrison
eillor

hen an author gives up his
erfect **UPPER WEST SIDE**
partment for love, all he's left
ith is the memories.

I once owned an apartment with a splendid terrace in a twin-tower Moderne building in the West Nineties, and for several years after I sold the place, I made a point of staying away om the neighborhood. I only saw the uilding if I was sitting on the left-and side of an airliner coming down e Hudson. There it was, 5,000 feet elow, my terrace and the windbreak f spruce trees in boxes and the wning under which my friends and I sed to sit around a glass-topped table n warm nights and drink wine and alk ourselves silly. And then it was one and the plane banked over Stat-n Island and made its approach into a Guardia, where I caught a cab to ur new apartment, three blocks west f the old one.

A marriage ended in that first apart-nent. I spent many evenings in the liv-ng room, writing letters to my wife in Copenhagen, reading her replies. We oth had fax machines, and some days we'd exchange twenty letters across the Atlantic, accusing, pleading, protesting ur love, alternately sentimental and bitter, hopeless, grieving, emotionally all over the map. And after the mar-riage, a romance began and ended there. And then I met Jenny, whom I would marry. And three women is too many for one apartment. So I sold it.

On the last day, I walked through the rooms with a video camera and taped each one, the little kitchen like a Pullman galley with the stainless-steel cupboards and the fridge with glass doors, the gloomy dining room full of books, the living room with the immense work table, the anonymous Sheraton-like guest room, the master bedroom with a sitting area and writing desk and bathroom with an old green-tiled shower stall. That night we held a candlelit last supper, my love and I, and stood on the terrace for one last time, and in the morning the movers came. I closed the door on those bare rooms and didn't look back.

But then, one day last August, five years later, the loss of it came crashing down on me. We were in London. My 2-year-old daughter and I were walking along the Serpentine, keeping pace with a pair of swans swimming. Something lovely in the air struck a chord with time past, and the old apartment hove to mind, and I felt a great loss of grandeur, as if I'd been deposed from high office and shipped into exile.

We lived on the twelfth floor, a classic six with that great terrace that you could have invited 40 of your closest friends to stand around on and sip champagne and it wouldn't have felt crowded.

A twelfth-floor terrace in New York is a large white elephant. Weeks go by when a chill wind blows and you venture out only to water plants and hose off the black grit that New York deposits on us daily. Every year the terrace springs leaks and workers come and replumb a drain, caulk a seam, replace some tiles. But then there were all those New York evenings, when we climbed on the elephant and felt a majesty that is hard to find in real life.

When you led your guests to the terrace, no matter who they were, Midwesterners or old West Siders, jaded rich or impressionable youth, they always stepped over the doorsill and stopped and took a deep breath. It was like stepping out on the deck of a ship anchored in the city, a sea of lights below, and here and there high promontories of lighted façades, the apartments of other cliff dwellers, a man working at a computer in his bedroom a hundred feet west, a woman brushing her hair, a TV set flickering and children toddling off to bed,

Interviews by Logan Hill, David Amsden, Sarah Bernard, Sara Cardace, Robert Kolker, Amy Larocca, Chris Tennant, and Jada Yuan.

his is my New York. **It glows.**" SHEILA METZNER, PHOTOGRAPHER

Mike Piazza

"Next to Shea Stadium, my favorite place to go in New York is Rao's, a little Italian restaurant on East 114th Street. They have great Southern Italian food, and what I like about the restaurant is its intimacy. There are only ten tables in the entire restaurant, and when you're there, you're a guest of Frank Pellegrino, whose family has owned the restaurant for 104 years. It's very homey and low-key, and last winter Frank even let me use his kitchen to cook a meal for a TV show that I did! Frank told me not to quit my day job."

and to the east the leafy darkness of the park and to the south the lights of midtown, glowing like a smeltery, and rising up toward us, the heat and low hum of the city, unmistakably erotic, an old slow music. We stood and gazed, and then I lit the lantern over the table and we sat down to supper, with Manhattan for a backdrop—lighting! scenery!—and everyone who sat at that table shone; even people wilted at the end of a bruising day became lighthearted and lucid and sweet and sexy.

Sometimes on a summer night, we would carry a mattress out to sleep on under the stars. High in the tower above our terrace, Sinclair Lewis lived in his last dwindling years before he went to Italy to die in 1951. I thought of him when I lay down below at night listening to the city. I read *Main Street* and *Babbitt* when I was in seventh grade because he was a Minnesota writer and I wanted to be one, too. He fell out of favor long ago, crushed under the weight of a Nobel Prize and hundreds of mean stories about his alcoholism and irascibility and pockmarked face, and I lay below on a mattress, feeling unreasonably lucky.

I had moved to New York from St. Paul, a well-to-do man in his mid-forties who craved the anonymity of the city. I had been a drudge through my twenties and thirties, working, working, working, and when my ship came in, I was desperate to get a reward. I found that I loved putting on a tuxedo and starched shirt and taking my loved ones to the Rainbow Room to dance on a revolving floor to a big orchestra with a girl singer and a boy singer doing Gershwin and Porter. I never attended my high-school prom, and in Manhattan the prom was waiting to attend me any night of the week. And on the nights I stayed home, I could walk out on the terrace and look at the city and feel enlarged, uplifted, ennobled. You don't get ennoblement from going to a therapist and weeping over your hard life; you get it by going outdoors. You open a door and step through it onto a terrace, and there's all the grandeur you ever dreamed of.

George Wolfe

On a corner of **WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK**, the Public Theater producer's life still turns.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAK FUNG WONG

When I was 12 years old, in 1968, my mother came to New York to do an advanced degree, and she brought me with her. We were staying in Hayden Hall, right on Washington Square Park. It was my first time coming to New York, from Kentucky, where we lived. I remember that *Hair* was showing then, but my mom decided I was too young to go see it. Still, Washington Square Park was a surreal place to be, and I thought the absurdity of that time and that park was distinctively New York.

It was the first place I saw a New York Shakespeare production, right there in the park. I remember an Up With People concert, with hippies all around. And I remember walking past newsstands that had semi-naked men on the cover, and thinking, Oh, so they have *magazines* for this? These menta emotional, spiritual, and subliminally psychosexual fireworks were going off inside of me. It's where I discovered theater, and it was where I discovered piece of myself and fell in love with New York. At the end of that summer, we went back to our small, conventional town in Kentucky, and the rest of m time there I spent wondering, How do get back to New York?

And then, in the summer of 1995, m mother came to visit. She was dying at that time—she'd had several strokes and was bound to a wheelchair. I was

ng on King Street, and I pushed her Sixth Avenue, and we circled around ashington Square Park and started king about that first summer, which d been an incredibly liberating time her as well.

I realized there's always been this rallel between my mother's life and ne: Whenever she was redefining a undary, I was, as well. We passed ayden Hall, and it was one of the last nes we had a really engaging conversation, because soon her speech started leave. My mother died that Decemr. So that afternoon in the park was is confluence of incredible emotions. this day, I still feel it.

The other day, I got out of a taxi with ni Collette right on that corner, and I ought, Oh, god! Possibilities!—Oh, . Loss. Life and death just crystalzed for me on that corner.

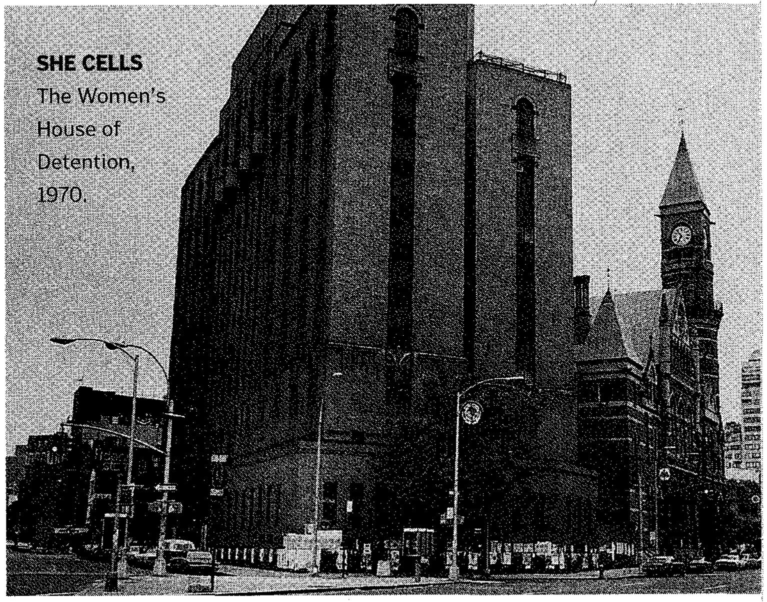
J Harvey

t **SUMMERSTAGE** in Central ark, one singer was ransported by another.

I saw Marianne Faithfull play at SummerStage in Central Park in July '99. I was sitting very near the front, and I was absolutely bowled over by her ability to have the crowd in the palm of her and—in a loving way. Marianne Faithull is probably the most charismatic, raceful woman I've ever seen in my ife, and effortlessly so. She wasn't tryng to be anything else than who she was. People were standing on their seats nd screaming between numbers, comletely enraptured. It was infectious.

On occasion in your life—quite oen, if you're lucky—you get these eautiful moments where suddenly verything makes sense to you. For me, as a musician, a lot of that does come from hearing great music. Everything came together, and I knew exactly why I'm here and what I'm doing. I didn't meet her afterward. I could have, but I was actually too awestruck by the whole thing—I didn't know what I could possibly say.

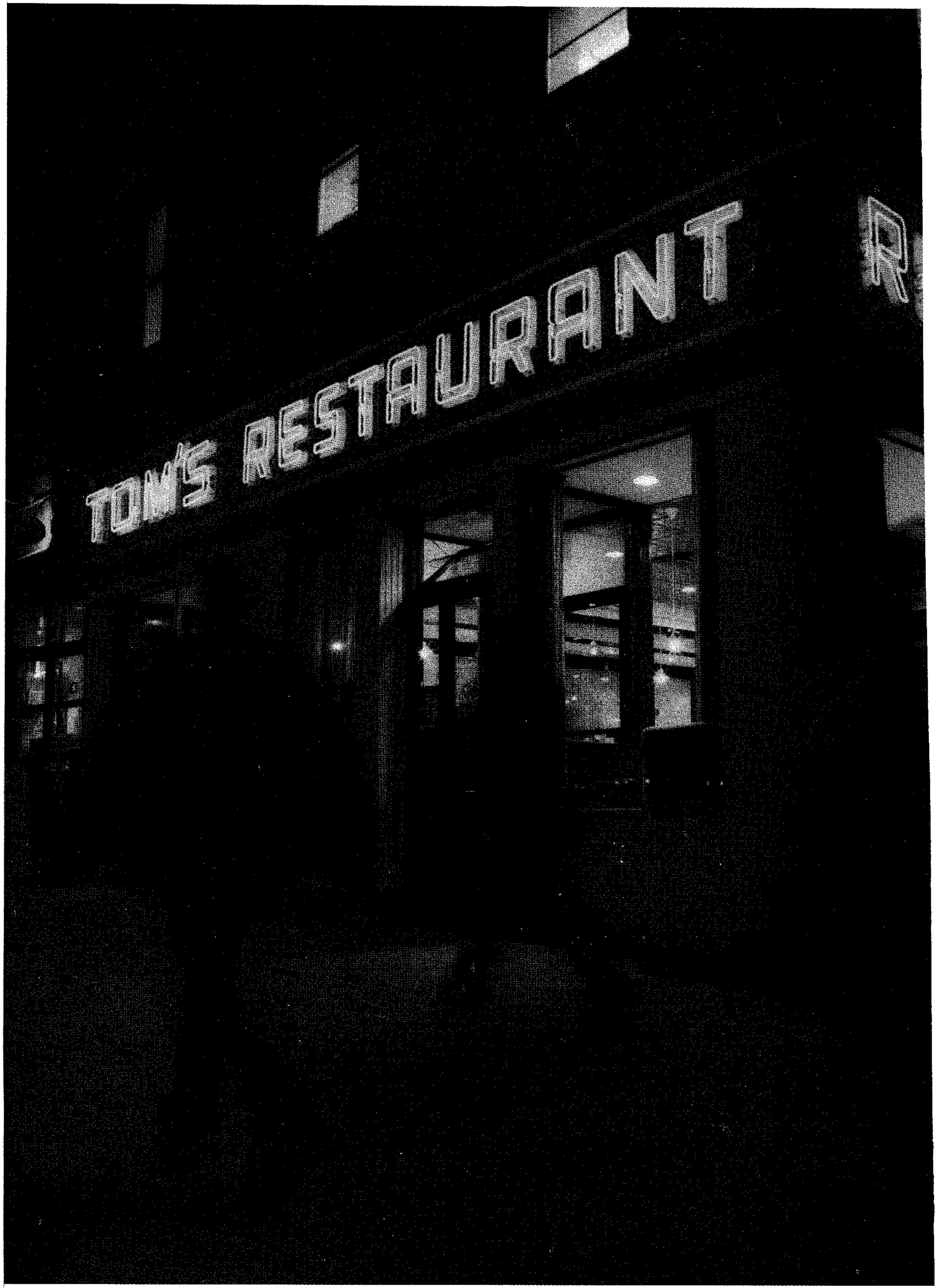
Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah.



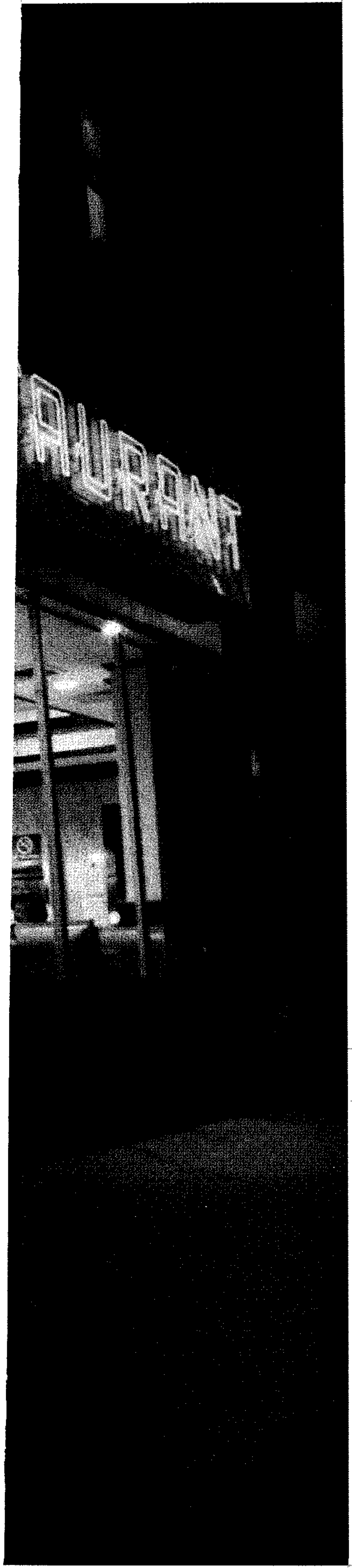
SHE CELLS The Women's House of Detention, 1970.

Fran Lebowitz

"The **Women's House of Detention**, in the Village, used to be across from this bakery, Sutters. Sutters had good coffee and you could smoke, so you could sit there and watch the prison outside. Now, of course, you can't smoke—the prison is *inside* the restaurant. The prison was like a girls' version of Rikers Island—no one had been convicted yet. This was before Giuliani, so they wouldn't just shoot them right away. Boyfriends and friends used to stand outside of the prison and chat—well, scream back and forth, many in Spanish. They'd yell, "Hey, Maria!" and Maria would yell back and they'd throw contraband back and forth. *Conversation* is a little too elegant a word for what was going on. I can't say I miss the detention center, but I do miss a city that would have a prison right across from a bakery right in the middle of the Village. Every inch hadn't been turned into some ersatz bohemian housing."



TOM'S RESTAURANT



Vince Passaro

Even before *Seinfeld*, **TOM'S RESTAURANT** was a touchstone for residents of Morningside Heights.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICIA MCDONOUGH

I took two of my kids to see the new Adam Sandler picture *Little Nicky*, and there it was again, behind Sandler as he sniffed some flowers: Tom's Restaurant at 112th and Broadway. When I was at Columbia in the seventies, my friends and I had a joke that someday, older and successful, we'd gather for lunch, and Tom's would be so famous we'd be able to jump in a cab and say, "Driver, take me to Tom's." It would be the Sardi's of the Bromo-Seltzer set.

This turned out, bizarrely, to be nearly true. Tom's is a Columbia haunt and home to senior citizens on fixed incomes looking for an inexpensive full-size Sunday meal available all week long. Its arrival as a second-tier New York icon came first with the house-mix version of Suzanne Vega's *Tom's Diner* and was cemented by serving for nearly a decade as the exterior of the diner where Jerry Seinfeld confabbed with Elaine, Kramer, and George. Now visitors come from around the world just to see the place.

Its fame always strikes me as a piece of bittersweet personal comedy. Tom's, though called a restaurant, really is a diner, one of a decreasing number of fifties-vintage cheap-food establishments in Manhattan. I spent hundreds of hours there with the woman I dated through my college years, now my wife and the mother of our three sons. We would go on Saturday evenings, spending our last money on the early editions of the Sunday papers and coffee and a shared sugar-soaked glazed donut, which was best eaten with forks. Invariably, we'd argue about literature. "You don't like any women writers," she said. I offered Flannery O'Connor and Joan Didion. "They're not really women," she said. "Henry James is more of a woman writer than they are."

Later, after fights, after rapprochements, after movies (dozens and dozens of movies, at the Thalia, the New Yorker, the Embassy, and later the Metro), we'd retreat to the window seat in the corner, do the crossword, watch for friends, and work out the boundaries of a shared world view. When we were flush, we had cheeseburger specials, with the great fries and the always-near-flat cokes from the fountain. One of us might even go for the roast-turkey supper, which on weekends came with stuffing, soup to start, salad, two vegetables, coffee, and dessert, an extravagance at $3.75.

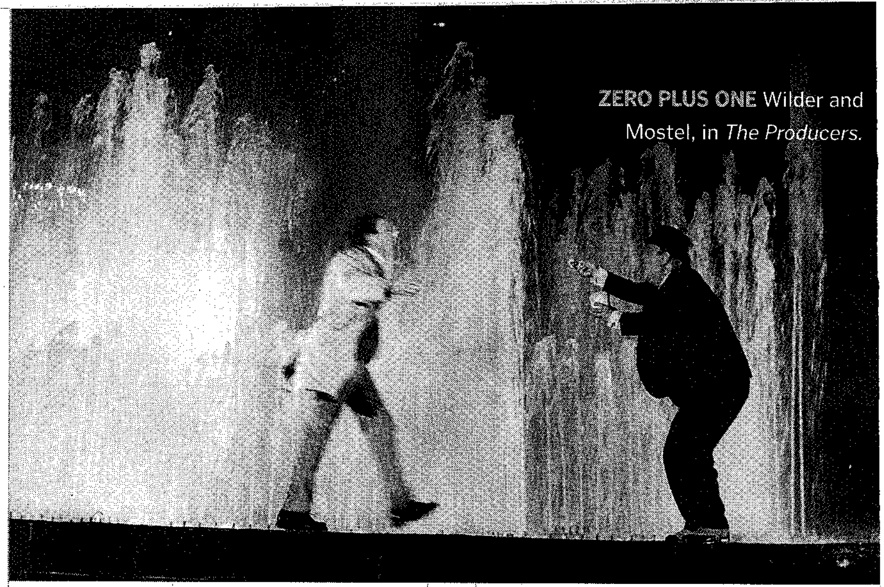
We had times apart, of course, Beth

Dan Rather

My own window on the city is the CBS Broadcast Center on West 57th Street—a building that, ironically, is notoriously short on windows. Where were you when the *Challenger* exploded? When the Gulf War broke out? When Reagan was elected (this year's contest may be harder to fix in a single moment)? For me, the answer for all is: at my desk in Studio 47, a place where the walls echo with history.

and I, and if I were to meet any other woman, it would be at the College Inn up the block. Tom's was for her and me. They all knew us there, not by name but by the matching narratives of maturing faces and growing intimacy: Betty the 60-ish waitress with her flaming red hair—"How are ya, Ba-bay"—and the other waitress, of similar years, so shy we never learned her name, knowing her only by her tiny little-girl voice and her fabulous jet-black wig. The guys behind the counter, Tommy and the rest of them, were dark and muscular young men forever wiping things down with white cloths and hot water from the coffee urns. "Yes, my friend, whatever you like my friend." When we were broke, "No problem, pay me next time, sure, sure."

This is our neighborhood still, vastly more expensive but in some way incurably grubby. We like it that way. Beth took one of our boys in for an ice cream recently, and Tommy, his hair and mustache gone gray like the aging Giancarlo Giannini, asked her, "You still married to that guy?" Yes, she said, in a tone that, I'm certain, very much depended on the day. "How many kids, two?" Three, she said. "Good, good, I stay married to my wife all these years, too," he said. "Too expensive to get divorced, and what for? Another one is better?" He makes that face, waves his hand: *Bah!* to the modern world.



ZERO PLUS ONE Wilder and Mostel, in *The Producers.*

Mel Brooks

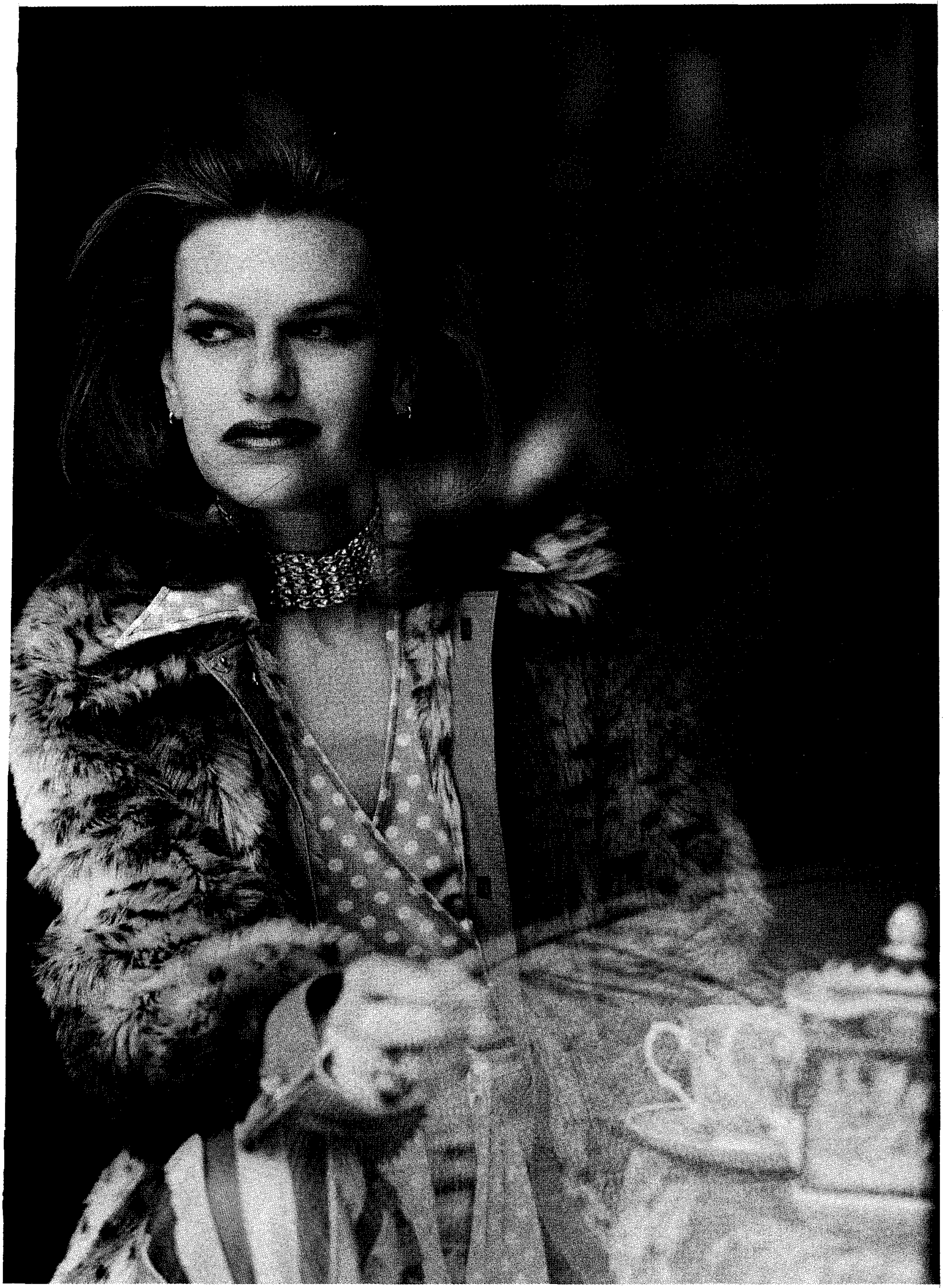
For a legendary director, the fountain at **LINCOLN CENTER** opens the floodgates.

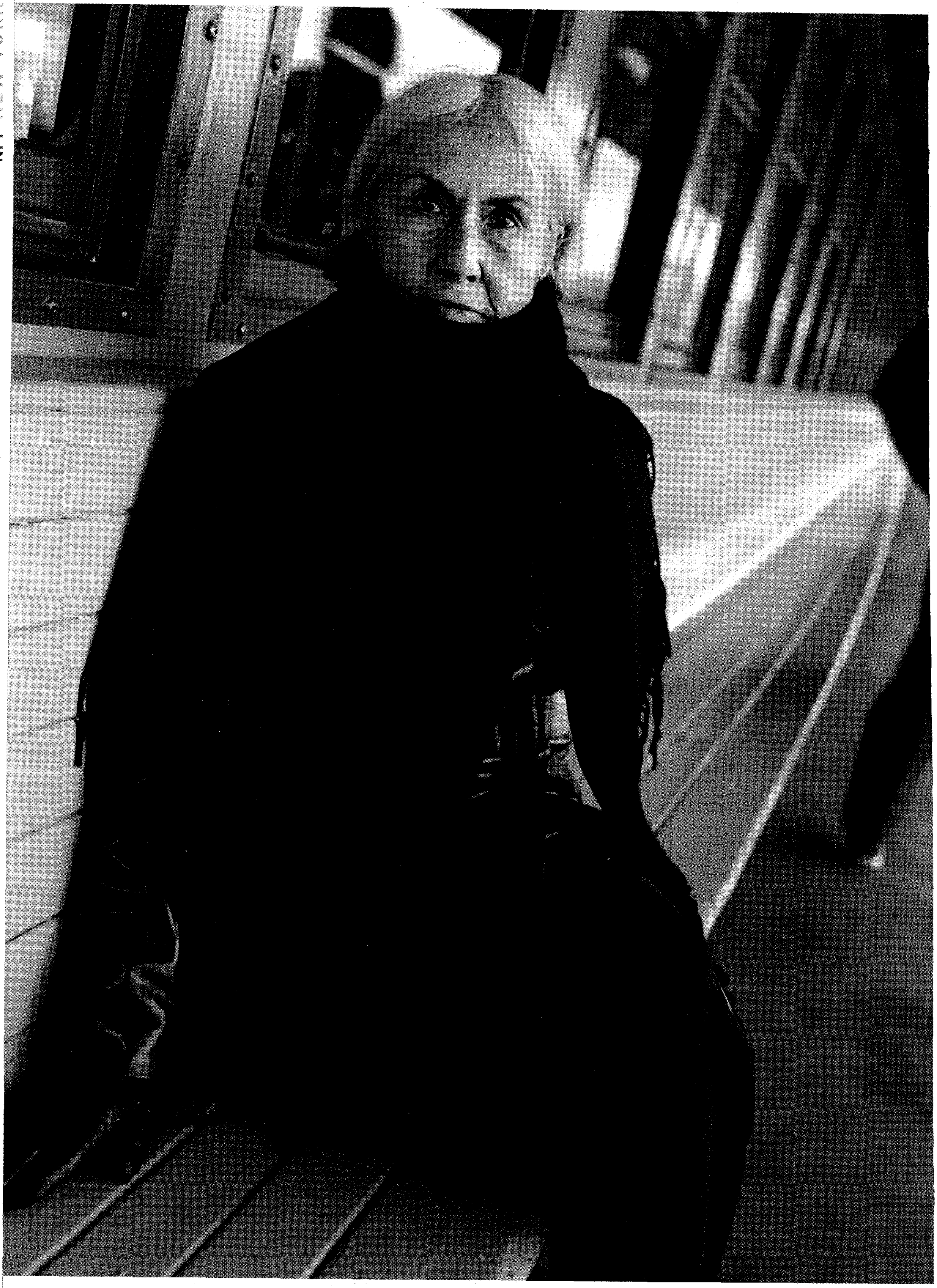
Recently, I was sitting in front of the fountain at Lincoln Center with Susan Stroman, working on my new Broadway production of *The Producers,* and I started puddling up, and Susan says, "What's the matter?" So I told her about this moment: In 1966, I walked past the fountain one night on my way to a casting session for *The Producers.* It's superb architecture, quite beautiful, and in a strange way it reminded me of the architecture of Albert Speer, and here I was doing a movie about Hitler. (Not that I'm such a pro-Nazi; quite the opposite.) And I said, "Gee, what a wonderful place to film the scene in which Bloom says to Bialystock, 'All my life I've wanted everything I've ever seen in the movies. Okay, I'll do it! I'll do it! I'll join you in this crazy scheme.' " So they give us one night to shoot, and we get the fountain to go 90 feet in the air—the only time they've ever done that—so we'd have this incredible orgasm of joy when Bialystock joins Bloom. So we front-lit it, back-lit it, lit the shit out of it. It was incandescent. Heavenly. We shot all night; in the last shot, you can actually see the sky turning from midnight blue to pale blue as dawn edged forward. Afterward, I went to the Brasserie with Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder, Sidney Glazier, and some others, and we all had champagne and scrambled eggs and coffee.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FIROOZ ZAHEDI

Sandra Bernhard

Tea & Sympathy, on Greenwich Avenue in the Village, holds this ongoing, emotional through-line for me, from just hanging out after shows, or going there when I was pregnant, or taking my baby there for the first time to eat macaroni and cheese. I'm friends with the owners, two displaced Londoners, Nicky and her husband, Sean. At this point, they're practically host and hostess of the whole Village. Sean used to model, but he's really edgy underneath his cuteness. And Nicky's a wickedly funny English chick—tough and real. You know that if there's any problem, she'll throw your ass out without thinking twice.

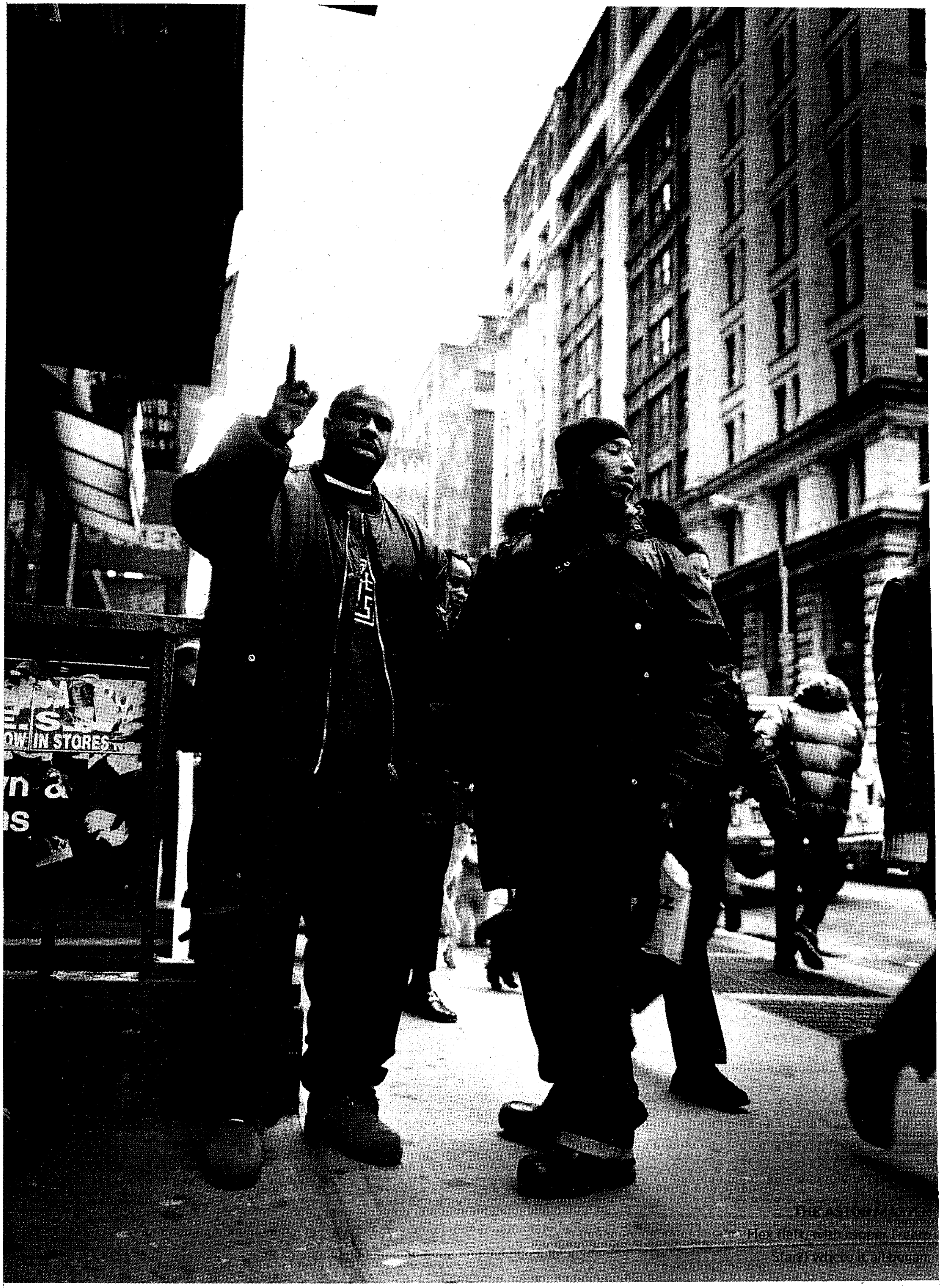




PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY ELLEN MARK

Polly Mellen

The Staten Island ferry reminds me of when I was very much in love with this man who I had to hide because he was married and it was such a scandal! We always had to go to Brooklyn and we had to go to Staten Island and we had to go to places where our friends would not see us, because of course when we broke up, we really hadn't broken up. Every place we went had to be where nobody we knew would see us. So when we played tennis, it had to be in New Jersey. And music! Music was very much a part of our lives, so we would go to the Metropolitan Opera or to Madison Square Garden, but we would sit up quite high, wear dark glasses. It was such a scandal! My parents were quite scandalized! And of course he was kind of a famous man, so it had to be handled very delicately and very carefully . . . but it lasted many years, and I suppose everyone knew and just thought it was awful. • It was 40 years ago, but a day never goes by that I don't think of him a little bit. I live on the thirtieth floor, and I can see all the bridges and the East River . . . all the way to the Bronx! And whenever I think about the outer boroughs of Manhattan, it's like a hug that I remember, a firm hand on my back, a confidence. The most attractive man I ever knew fell in love with me.


OW IN STORES

THE ASTOR MART: Flex (left, with rapper Fredro Starr) where it all began.

John Updike

n **155TH STREET**, “an
land of antique aspiration
nd gracious scale.”

Taxi drivers don’t want to go to West 155th Street. They don’t want to be dragged so far uptown, with slim prospects of a fare back. If they bring you from the air- ort, they insist on trying to get there y the Harlem River Drive, discovering oo late that the only way to get noothly onto West 155th Street is to pproach it from across the river, via he Yankee Stadium exit from the Dee- an Expressway, past the ghost of the ld Polo Grounds. Up this far, Broad- ay has a strong Hispanic accent and oasts a considerable trade in illegal rugs. Nevertheless, the long block of 155th between Broadway and Riverside Drive—one-way east—has idyllic qualities; it is broad enough for diagonal parking, cobbles peep through its asphalt, and on its southern side the greenery of Trinity Church Cemetery, lifted high on a succession of terraces, shades the stones and names of many a once-eminent citizen, including John James Audubon, John Jacob Astor, and Mayor Fernando Wood (who wanted New York City to secede in 1861).

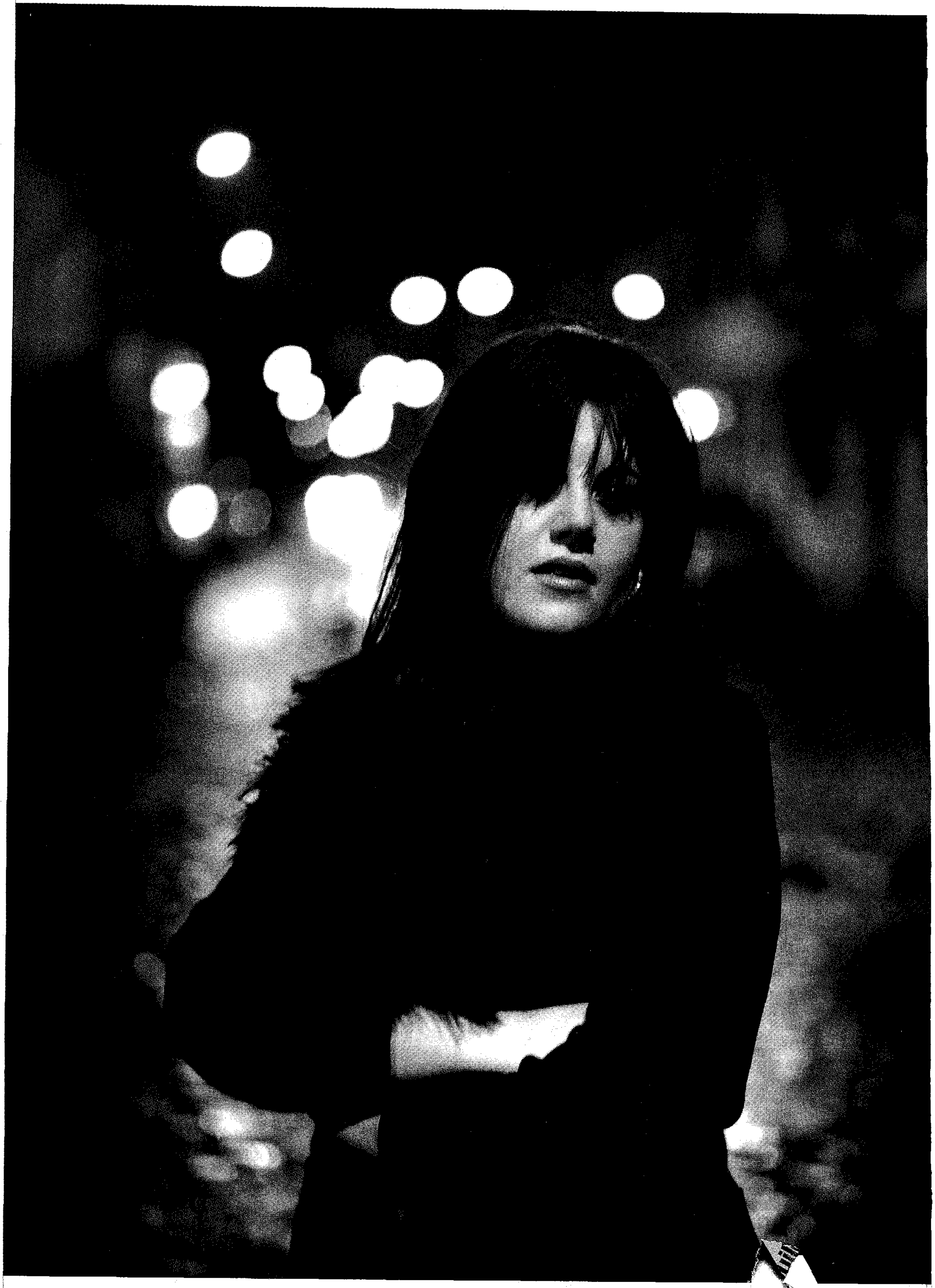
On the northern side, a succession of granite façades present the back side of a noble plaza designated Audubon Terrace; planned in 1904, built on land once owned by Audubon, the Beaux-Arts complex was intended as a cultural center. The Museum of the American Indian has lately vacated its space here for a federal building in the Battery, but the American Numismatic Society and the Hispanic Society of America—with its Goyas and Velazquezes, a gloomy remnant of the plutocrat Archer Huntington’s passion for Spain—hold on, as does, in the middle of the block, at No. 633 West 155th, the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Beyond the heroically figured bronze doors, a sparsely visited interior, staffed by a crew of mostly female employees and bustling during only a few annual fêtes for its generally elderly membership, houses the apparatus of an artistic aristocracy. Sculptures by Paul Manship and paintings by Childe Hassam decorate the generous spaces, constructed in the early twenties by the munificence of Huntington, himself a member. An auditorium added in 1930 turned out to have acoustical properties highly valued by today’s recording companies. The library on the second floor, where dinners and meetings are held in sobering view of the cemetery across the street, is surely one of the loveliest, and emptiest, rooms in Manhattan.

But it is the street itself, which would be quite unknown to me but for this in-

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ERIN PATRICE O’BRIEN

Funkmaster Flex

In 1990, before I was on the radio, I had taken a basement apartment that cost $400 a month. And my rent was backed up, because I was counting on this job doing A&R at Profile Records. Luckily, I got it, and started making $400 a week working on the seventh floor of this building on the corner of Broadway and Astor Place. The office was gloomy, way in the back. The lights were always blowing out, the demos just piled up, I had this nasty sound system, and the room was small. I used to come in real early and listen to bags of demos—it was the dream. There’d be piles of tapes and videotapes, and people didn’t know who I was then, so I used to get so excited if one was addressed to me because that meant somebody knew I was working there. I thought that would be the height of my career, doing A&R at Profile Records, and I was happy about it. Profile isn’t there anymore—but Astor Place still has the energy it had ten years ago. For people, the flyers, style, clothing, it’s where I go to see what’s going on downtown. And I still check out the guys in front of the building to see if people are giving out flyers to my parties.

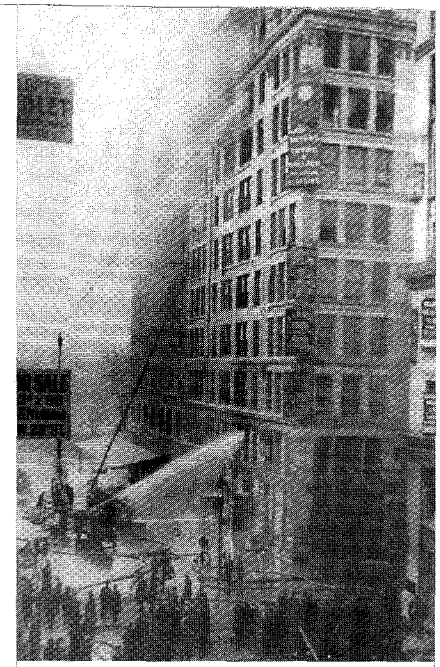


tution, that I wish to celebrate: It pes down rather sharply toward the iding Hudson, and a warm river wind ushes the face of those marching wn Broadway to attend the Acade- y's mid-May ceremonial. New York's austrophobia lifts in this vicinity; the ildings throw short shadows, and the eighborhood's stately elements—the rrace, the walled cemetery, the Epis- pal church across Broadway—stand a kind of pledge the past has made to e future. Some day, it is not unlikely, population pressure extends the orthern spread of gentrification as in- xorably as it has moved south, taxi rivers will be less surprised to be di- ected here. Audubon Terrace was des- gnated a New York City Historic Dis- ict in 1979, and there was talk of re- aming the 157th Street subway station n its honor. For now, pedestrian traffic minimal and automobiles are just assing through, one way up to Broad- vay. The metropolis is not all seethe; is- ands of antique aspiration and gracious cale persist. Money with its wrecking all may some day threaten even these nderattended museums, but in my life f Manhattan visitation this byway has erved, with its slanting sidewalk and riverine vista, to remind me that a complete city includes quiet places.

Stephen Jay Gould

Through the windows that light his **NYU** office pass the ghosts of an infamous fire.

On the Sabbath day of March 25, 1911, economic need trumped religious propriety as my grandmother, a 16-year-old immigrant just a few months off the boat, went to her job as a seamstress in a sweatshop for shirtwaists. On that very day, a disastrous fire broke out at the largest shirtwaist factory in New York, the Triangle company. Many workers could not escape from this drastically overcrowded building with inadequate exits (and one door illegally locked by management, ostensibly to prevent theft); 146 young women died, many leaping to certain death from ninth- and tenth-story windows, as the wall of flame advanced upon them. My grandmother worked for a different company, only a few blocks away.



BURNING SCANDAL Dousing the Triangle shirtwaist factory, March 25, 1911.

Five years ago, on accepting a professorial appointment at NYU, I received a corner office in the Triangle building, bought and refurbished by the university many years ago. My tenth-floor office occupies an area that burned during the infamous fire—and many women jumped

Monica Lewinsky

PHOTOGRAPH BY
GEORGE HOLZ

“Very early on a bitter-cold morning, on the day I first moved to New York last winter, I took a walk down Greenwich Street. It was my first morning walk as a New Yorker. I went down to the meatpacking district and passed by all the great restaurants like Pastis and Florent and walked down by the river a bit, just clearing my head. Everybody takes those morning walks at some point in their life, and this one was just—I'm smiling right now just thinking about it. It was perfect: Everything was quiet and crisp and clean; I felt at peace, like I really belonged here. I love the neighborhood now. Everybody is so wonderful to me. Just last night in the D'Agostino's, someone said to me, "Hey, Monica, welcome to the neighborhood." People are very protective—at various times they've sent reporters looking for me in the opposite direction. I feel like a real New Yorker now.”

MUDD ROOM Richard Lloyd, Debbie Harry, and Amos Poe, circa 1977.

Moby

When I was 15, there was this punk-rock band called Fear that was playing at the **Mudd Club**. One of my friends told his parents that he was just going out to the movies and asked to borrow the car. We drove in from Darien, Connecticut. None of us had ever been to New York at night on our own. Eventually, somehow, we found the Mudd Club. Fear went on at, like, two or three in the morning. We were these kids from the suburbs, and the club was all full of dark, dangerous punk rockers, so the whole thing was really exciting. It was the first time I had ever seen people slam-dance. But when we got back to the station wagon, it wouldn't start. We had to call the driver's father, and at like five o'clock in the morning, he had to drive in to pick us up. I have such distinct memories of sitting in a diner at the corner of Broadway and Canal, exhausted and terrified at what this guy's father was going to do to us. But he was a lot more forgiving than we thought he would be.

from the very windows that now illuminate my space.

By the luck of employment, Grammy lived to meet and marry my grandfather Papa Joe, a cloth-cutter who boarded at her aunt's house. About five years ago, I found an address penciled into one of m grandfather's books—255 East 7th Street. I showed the scribbling to my mother, who remembered the address a her natal home. I doubted that the building still existed in this neighborhood of change and subsequent housing projects But there it resides still, as we discovere on our "field trip"—an ordinary tenemen located between Avenues C and D.

New York City includes some of the grandest places on earth—from the Brooklyn Bridge and Central Park to the more conventional architectural gems of Empire State and Flatiron. But my New York shall be two absolutely ordinary places, central to the lives of people I loved, and who made my life possible in the most literal sense—a grim and undistinguished workplace that was not to be my grandmother's pyre and a wretched house, cynically and shabbily built for profit but destined to be the foundation of hope for a young couple starting at the bottom in a land of opportunity.

Spalding Gray

A performer's improbable vacation in the **ELM GROVE** at Central Park.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOEL STERNFELD

My hearing's not good anymore. My doctors asked me if I'd been exposed to rock-and-roll music, but when I came back to New York for *The Best Man* after being in Sag Harbor for five years, I realized I'd been exposed to 30 years of the noises of New York. The squealing brakes, the buses—I now walk around with earplugs. But I love to walk through the elm trees near the Robert Burns statue just above 67th Street or so, in Central Park. It's where the American elms are, and it starts just above the merry-go-round. I'd go up there between shows and watch the progression of light in

Photograph by Stephanie Chernikowski.

TELAMANN TELAMANN

NOT [illegible]

[illegible]

ose elm trees, and it was magical for e because that's just what I grew up ith in Barrington, Rhode Island. We st the elms to Dutch elm disease, but ey're beautiful in the park. There's othing more beautiful than that tree to e. Not palm trees or wild South Ameri- n vegetation. Maybe it's the puritanical ing in me—those dark, twisting trunks nd those beautiful leaves. So I'd risk a lad bar—I'm a salad-bar junkie—and t there and eat under those trees in be- ween performances. It's the most peace- l place for me in New York City. I'd just it there for a while and then walk back own to the theater, and put back in the arplugs, in the city of chaos.

Chuck Close

At **MAX'S KANSAS CITY**, art vas better than money—and t was worth fighting for.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
CHRISTIAN WITKIN

Max's Kansas City, on Park Avenue South, was a magnet for visual artists, musicians, writers, critics, movie stars, politicians—virtually everybody moved through this place. Artists traded art for a tab. There was a huge John Chamberlain sculpture in the front, one of the compressed galvanized-steel ones—originally a bar tab. It became the coatrack. There was a Donald Judd hanging over the banquettes in the front of the bar, where my generation tended to hang out. The bar sort of ended up being sectioned off by generation. People like Robert Smithson and Richard Serra sat in the front. It was really a heavy-duty, life-or-death struggle for the soul of art—an incredibly heady intellectual experience. Everyone would go there after openings and discuss what they'd seen, telling one another they were jerks for liking what they liked or for not appreciating somebody else's work. There were fights, people throwing drinks in people's faces, punching people out. In the back room there was a red Dan Flavin fluorescent corner piece that cast a weird light on everything that took place in the back room, which was far more decadent, I suppose. It was Warhol and all his entourage and hangers-on. And if Rauschenberg came in with his friends, he would tend to sit back there. It was certainly a stranger crowd in the back, a lot of transvestites and stuff like that.

You just knew if you showed up there'd be something going on, and always something to look at. I remember Janis Joplin, drunk out of her mind, with a bottle of Southern Comfort in one hand, holding up the jukebox—which was a great jukebox, by the way—singing along with Billie Holiday at the top of her lungs, tears streaming down her cheeks.

The place gave you a sense that there were other people out there in the same boat. We all helped each other. Now that sort of thing might be called networking, I suppose.

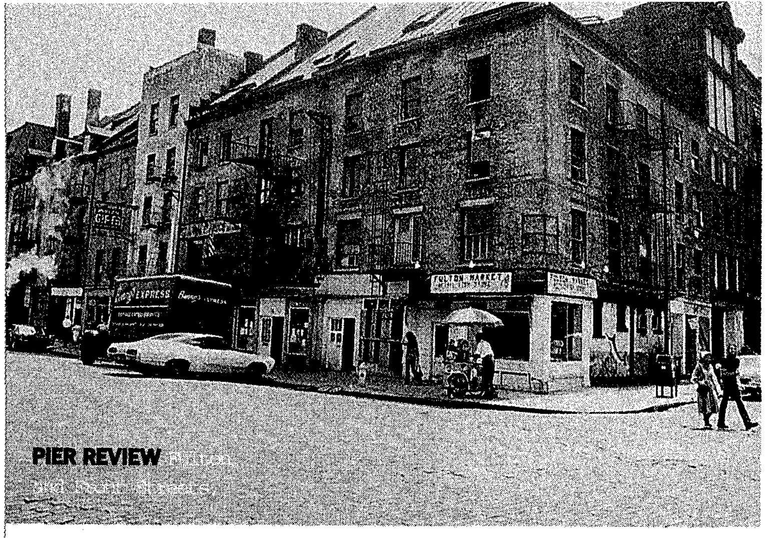
Junot Díaz

Walking a little girl through **WASHINGTON HEIGHTS**, a writer saw the power of his people.

Back in the early nineties, the police had killed Jose "Kiko" Garcia. He was Dominican, and the police were swearing to God that he was a drug dealer, so they had to shoot him. The Dominican community absolutely exploded. If you'd seen the videos at the time, you'd have thought you were looking at something happening in another country. There were cars burning in the streets, entire blocks blockaded off. I was living in New Jersey, working full-time delivering pool tables. My girlfriend participated in a program called Heal the Children, where children from all over the world come to the United States to get free medical care. The child who was with her was this little Dominican girl, Ana. Ana was the most wonderful girl on earth, and she had a tumorous growth that was distorting her face and putting tremendous pressure on her eye and her brain. She was scheduled to have an

Peter Duchin

"Every time I walk past Carnegie Hall, I look up to the ninth-floor windows and think of the wonderful times I had there when I got out of the Army. I lived in a loft there—really, it was more of a studio—and this was my very first apartment, out of which I started my career. Some of the lofts were used for living, and some were also used for instruction—music teachers, ballet teachers—and there was a terrific roof. I could climb onto the roof and walk across into Bobby Short's apartment whenever he gave a party. And you could go up the back way and you'd find yourself on the very top level of Carnegie Hall, having not paid, and catch yourself a concert."



PIER REVIEW Fulton and Front Streets,

Philip Glass

"When I first moved to New York, I lived in an SRO near music school, but in 1959 or so, I met some artists who told me about these loft situations—big, empty industrial spaces—down near the **Fulton Fish Market**. It was a special moment, when it was possible to come into New York with this kind of frontier spirit: I paid $30 a month, and my neighbors—Mark Di Suvero lived right above me, Jasper Johns lived in the neighborhood—were very upset because they thought I should be paying $25. They said the landlord was gouging me and that this would raise everyone else's rent. They thought I was gentrifying. There was no hot water or heat, but if you learned to run those damn pot-bellied stoves, you could get one cherry-red and keep it going for days. For fuel, we'd walk out at night—there'd be a lot of deliveries in the port area, and there'd be these wooden pallets that things were loaded on. So you'd have wood for your stove. It was wonderful, just being a part of that unseen part of the city—like gathering wood in the forest, but the forest was lower Manhattan."

operation at Columbia Presbyterian during those troubles. She had to go in—it's not every day you can get five specialists to volunteer a free afternoon. So I took her in. So I was walkin little Ana, age 2, to the hospital, and everything was insane. But the thing that struck me was that when we were walking through, people were absolutely wonderful. I'd been in Washington Heights repeatedly all through my childhood, but I'd never felt this sense of cohesion and community. And I had never seen little Ana so absolutely happy—and she hated going to the doctors who were only going to hurt her. This may be me projecting, but I had never seen little Ana feel so absolutely at home. There comes a time in every community when it becomes aware of its power. I've always felt that I was wading through its future.

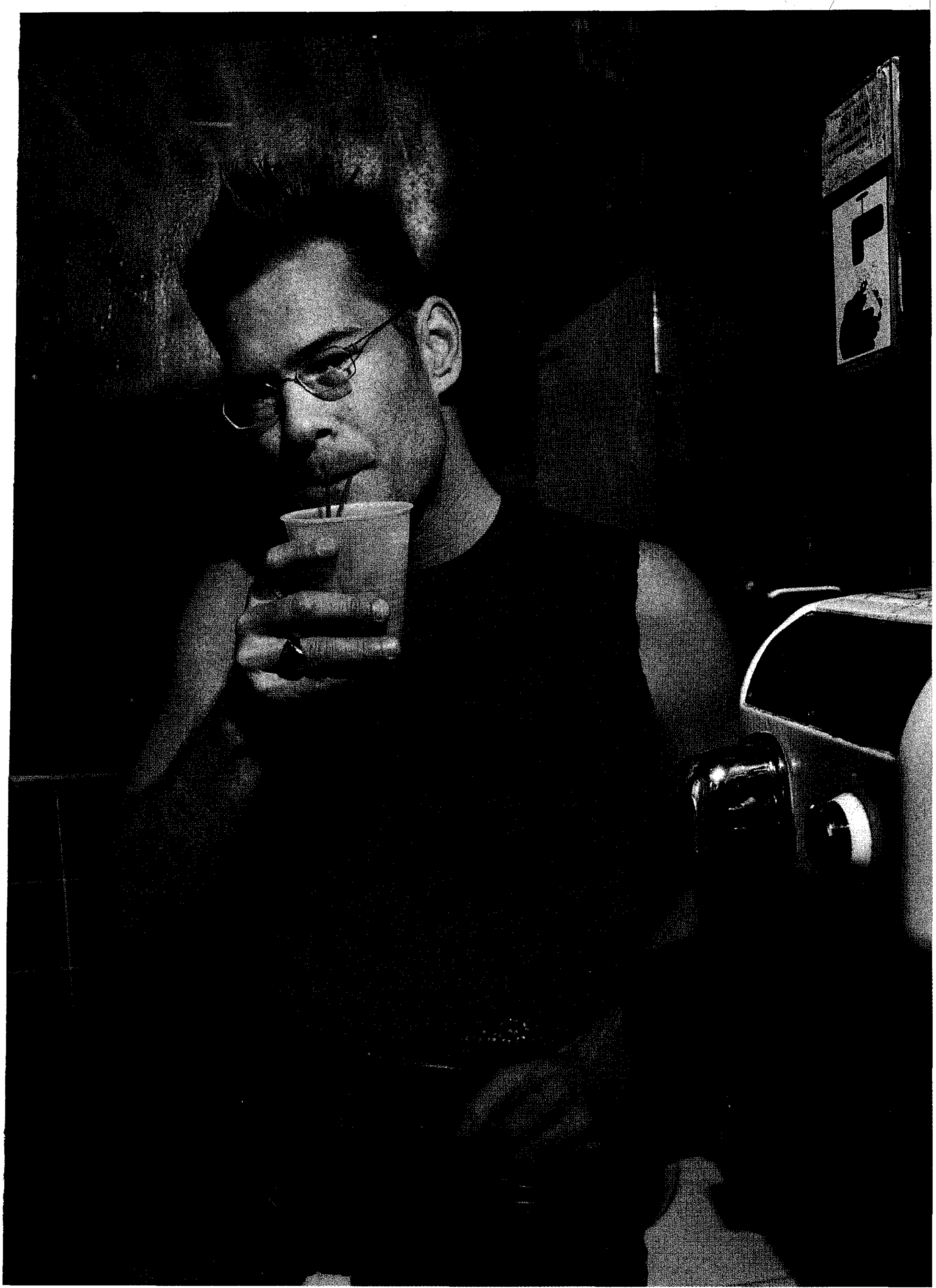
John Bartlett

At this **PYRAMID**, the nightclub on Avenue A, some of the mummies were really daddies.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN FINKE

In New York in 1984, the summer before my senior year, I started going to the Pyramid Club on Avenue A pretty much every night. To me it was the edge of the world. It was beyond my wildest imagination. It was much more camp then, and they always had people dancing on the bar, like go-go dancing, a lot of drag, a lot of androgyny. I met RuPaul there the weekend that he had moved to New York from Atlanta. He was doing a Grace Jones impersonation. He was lip-synching at that point. That summer, the big trend was everyone wore pajamas as clothes, so I was wearing pajamas pretty much every day in the city, old thrift-shop pajamas. I really had no idea I was going to go into fashion at all at that point. I was studying sociology at Harvard and I was working at Katz Communications as an intern. But Pyramid was very inspiring. And when I went home I had a mohawk and pajamas and my parents were not

New York Times Co./Lee Romero/Archive Photos



pleased. It was just my natural hair color, but it was completely shaved off and they were freaked. The ironic thing is it's still my favorite club; now my favorite night there is called "1984."

Edwidge Danticat

Through the **BOTANICAL GARDENS** was a path to a secret universe—the library.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BASTIENNE SCHMIDT

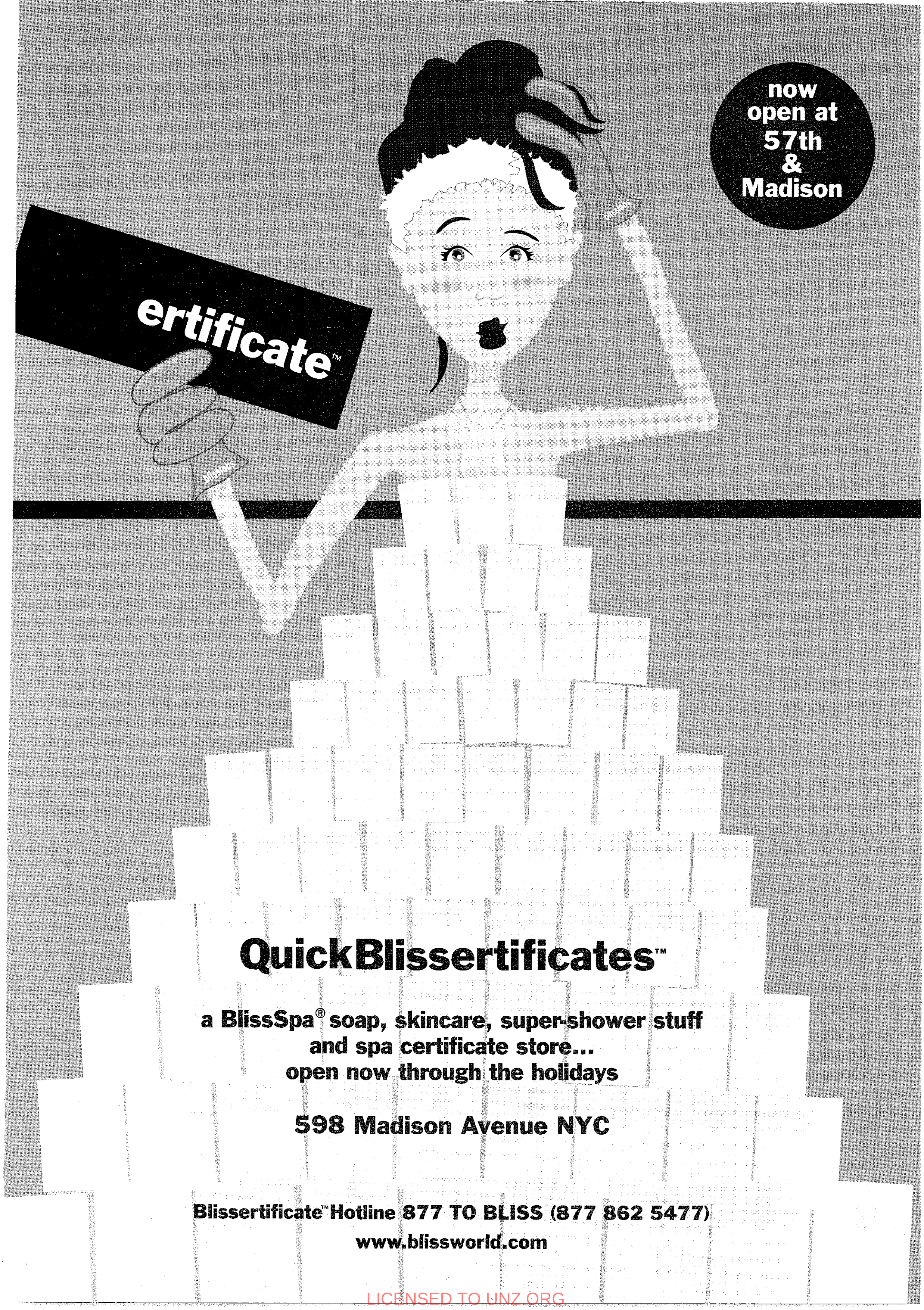
I went to Clara Barton High School in Crown Heights. It's positioned right across from the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and diagonally from the Brooklyn Museum. Often there was really violent competition between the students at Clara Barton, who were mostly women—it's a school for people who want to go into the health professions—and the students at Prospect Heights. You could count on it that there'd be a fight at school. My friends and I who didn't want to get into a fight would walk through the Botanical Gardens to get away from them. It was so different from the Brooklyn I knew and lived in that, walking through, it almost seemed that I'd escaped the city for a while. One of the paths had the names of all of these Brooklyn writers. I remember Paule Marshall, because I was reading her on my own, and Arthur Miller. And the Brooklyn Public Library was, for me, one of the most stunning buildings in the world. When I first came from Haiti, I was so awed that they trusted you with these books and tha they trusted you to bring them back. used to get in trouble with my parent because my father had really timed t time it would take to leave school an take the bus on Flatbush right home. I'd get in trouble because I would go to the library and stay there.

Kim Gordon

On **MOTT STREET**, an artistic and musical movement was launched—with a copy machine.

In NoLIta, there was this copy shop, Todd's Copy Shop, on Mot Street, between Spring and Prince. This was the early eighties. It was a very coveted job when I worked there. It wasn't exciting, but you could kind of lie back and read and know what was going on in the art world. Todd was, for a while, kind of the center of that world. It was one of the only copy shops that would let artists manipulate stuff with a color machine. He would have little shows—it was a very small shop, two little rooms—but he would do these shows up on the walls. People would go there and Xerox their résumés, their artwork, their grants, their press. I used to work there with Sarah Driver, a filmmaker. She lived with Jim Jarmusch, who would come in and Xerox his scripts. Jean-Michel Basquiat came in a couple of times. We Xeroxed his first artwork and we sold his record—Todd would sell people's records too. We could get deals on making flyers for our shows; there were a lot of bands making their flyers at Todd's.

Because of the real-estate boom, a lot has changed. Now New York's not as much an environment that's conducive to experimentalism. It's very mall-like downtown, people sitting and lounging at Pottery Barn, talking on their cell phones. We live mostly in Massachusetts now. We moved out here about a year ago. I didn't want my daughter to be exposed to supermodels tripping up and down the street.



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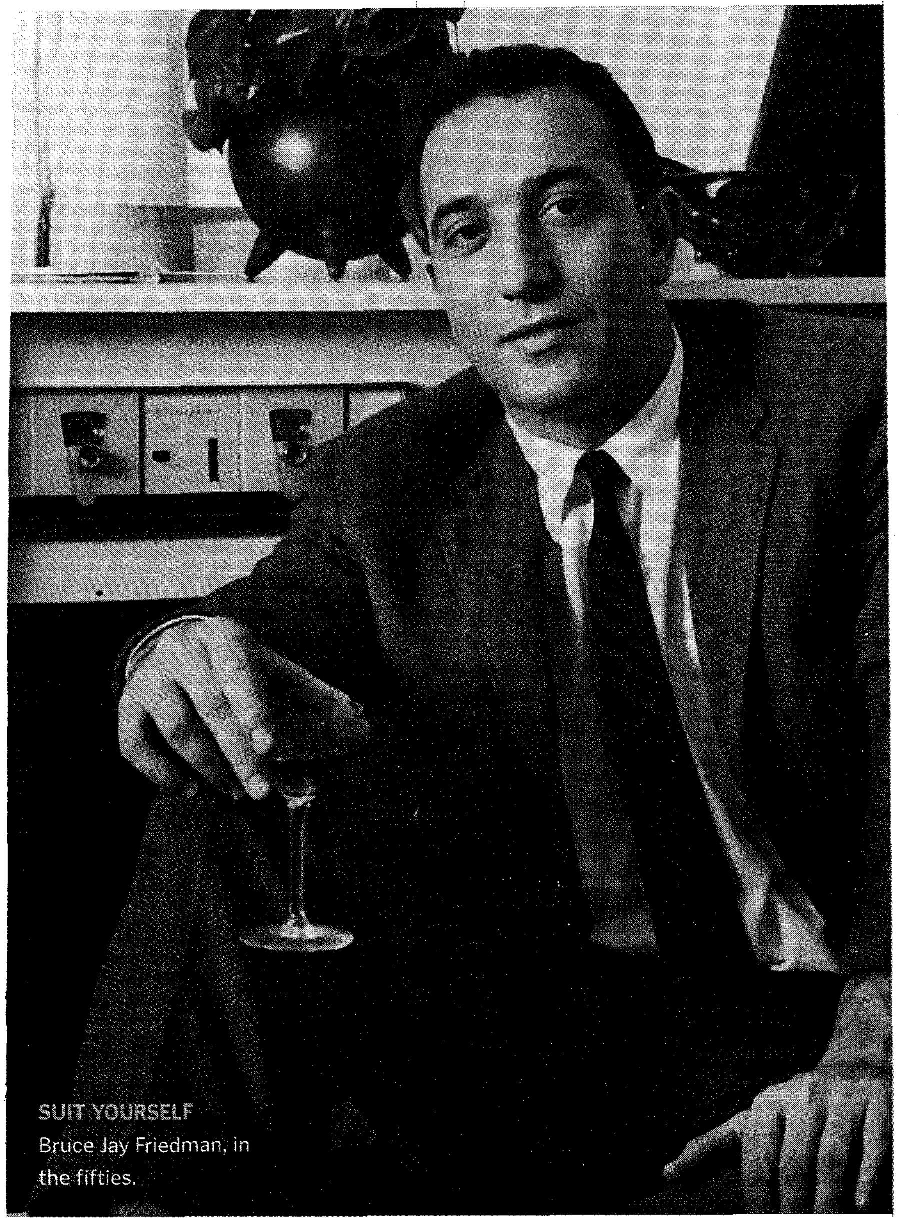
Bruce Jay Friedman

t the **TAILOR SHOP** he got omething that lasted longer han a new suit.

In 1953, having served my country honorably in the Korean War (flying around, taking pictures, writing stories for an Air Force magazine), I went to work for the Magazine Management ompany as assistant editor of a bite-ze publication called *Focus.* In no time at all, I was perceived to be a "comer" and put at the helm of yet another miniature magazine, called *Picture Life.* My salary was raised from $90 a week to $125. (I'd actually asked for a "rise," having come across the phrase in a British novel. The term puzzled Martin Goodman, my employer, who may have assumed I was asking him, indelicately, to adjust the inseam of my slacks. Tailoring was in the air, which will soon become clear.)

"Hi kid," said the great DiMaggio, and turned back to the mirror.


SUIT YOURSELF Bruce Jay Friedman, in the fifties.

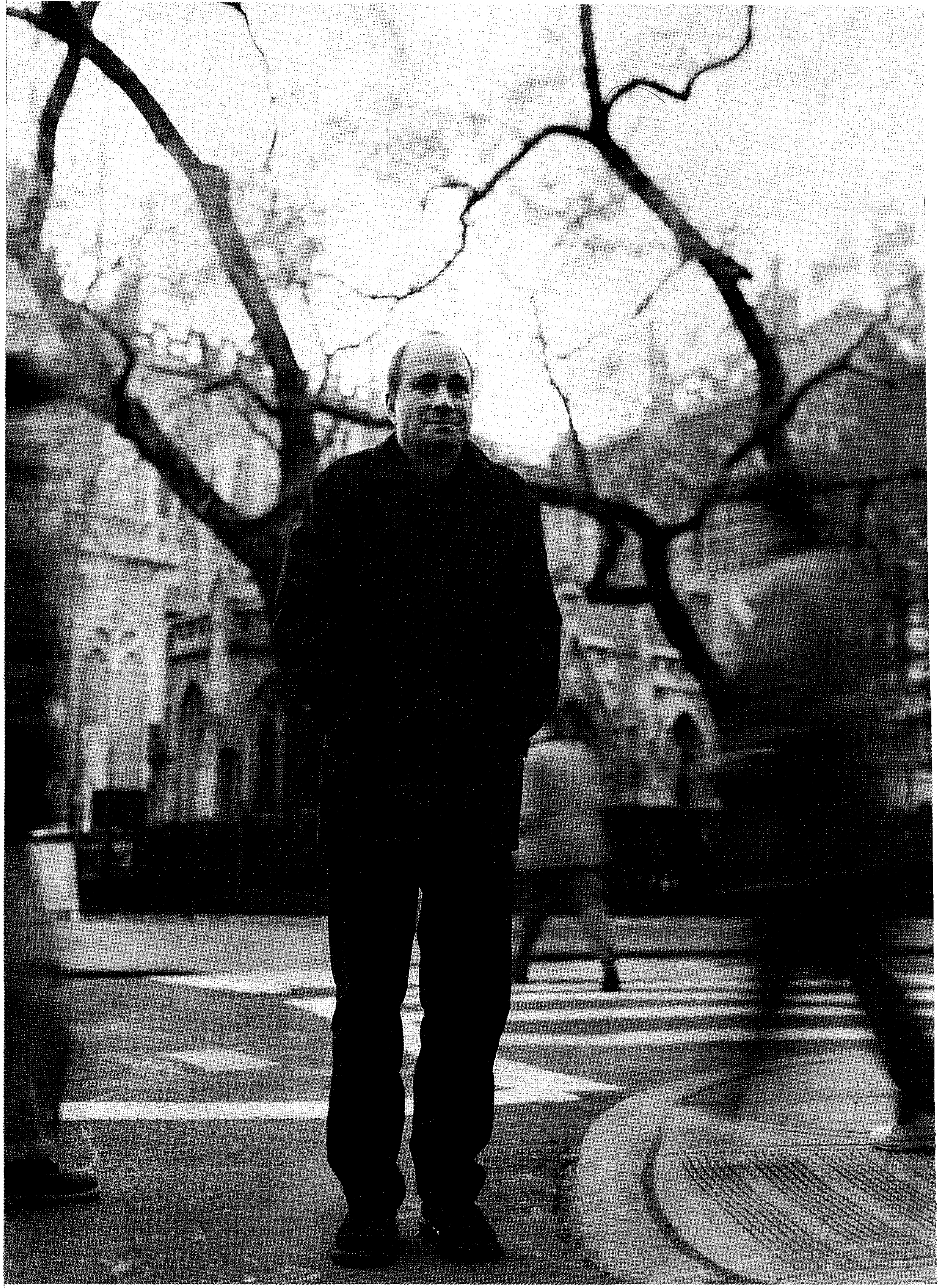
Flushed with success and well-being, I decided to upgrade my usual lunch—tuna on rye, and coffee, at the counter of Boyd Chemists, which was on the ground floor of my office building at 60th Street and Madison Avenue. I headed for the legendary Gino, of the prancing-zebra walls, and had a more-than-satisfying meal that included California red wine (Pinot Noir—a shaky proposition then), shrimp marinara, and memorably thick-crusted bread of a variety that was new to me. Returning to my office along 60th Street, I passed a small brownstone building with a sign outside that read: OTTO PERL, TAILOR. What an excellent time, I thought, to leave the ranks of the off-the-rack crowd and have my first suit made. I climbed the steps to the second floor—I took them two at a time then—and there to greet me was Otto Perl himself, a small, slender, bald man in shirtsleeves, with a tailor's measuring tape around his neck. He began immediately and approvingly to trace and describe my measurements in the air.

"Come, come," he said, ushering me into a small fitting room. "There is another client I'd like you to meet."

I followed him, and there, in front of a three-way mirror, being fitted for an Otto Perl suit, stood Joe DiMaggio. I would like to say that the Yankee Clipper came gliding effortlessly in my direction to shake my hand, as if he were pulling down a long fly ball. This was not the case. With characteristic taciturnity, he said, "Hi, kid," and turned back to the mirror. I was properly awed (I grew up two blocks from Yankee Stadium) and thought it would be rude to tell him I was a Brooklyn Dodger fan.

Could the episode have come about in any other city—downtown Dayton, maybe? Unlikely. Was it a magical New York moment? Absolutely. And Otto's pinstriped suit never wore out. After fifteen years, I virtually had to beat it to death with a stick.

Photograph: courtesy Bruce Jay Friedman.



Ross Bleckner

n the **GRACE CHURCH ARDEN,** he buried an old riend—and an old life.

HOTOGRAPH BY ICHAEL LAVINE

Maybe I shouldn't say it, but when I was 20, in my second year at YU in 1970, I smoked a joint with ome friends in the garden in front of race Church at 10th Street and roadway. There was something in hat joint—PCP, or "angel dust," it was called—and it was very hallucino-enic. But I didn't know that. So I was out very late and when I got ome to my apartment on 12th Street, saw my cat had died. I was hysteri-al and on these drugs, so it was be-ond freaky—like, this can't be happening. I didn't know what to do, so I ust picked up the cat and took a little garden shovel with me, and I buried t in the yard in front of Grace Church.

It was late, really late, and cold, so I lug a hole really quickly by a tree, and I put the cat in there. While I was sitting there, really upset, I had an epiphany and I thought, I have to go back to school at NYU—this was during Christmas break—and tell the head of the department that I wanted to change my major to be an artist. I just thought, I have to do what I want to do—I can't be miserable anymore.

Jon Stewart

When they tow your car to **THE IMPOUND LOT,** rock bottom is within striking distance.

I spoke English when I first got to the city in 1987, so I got to drive the van for a highfalutin' caterer. One day I double-parked in midtown, dropping off endive stuffed with chicken-fig deliciousness for somebody's Christmas party. The sign said DON'T PARK HERE, but I had commercial plates, and I thought that gave me diplomatic immunity.

I saw the van getting towed and chased after it all the way to the impound lot across the West Side Highway, which was quite a run in my catering boots. I was sure that once I showed the towing people that I was in uniform and clearly on a mission to deliver delicious treats to a Christmas party, they would take pity on me and give the van back. Apparently they don't work that way.

If you've ever been to the impound lot, you know that it is truly one of the most depressing places on earth. Imagine the Gulag with a lot of cars. It's a tin lean-to with no windows that they've set up in an empty lot with barbed wire. The people who work there basically take shit for a living. There's a lot of screaming and yelling—not a lot of Christmas spirit. I do believe there was a garland or two, but, that's sort of like spitting in the wind.

When I got there, I didn't have enough money to get the van out. I sat in this tin building with no insulation, sweating my ass off, weeping the bittersweet tears of a man who knew he had run afoul of the law and was still trying to hang on to his humanity. I realized at that moment that I'd better write some jokes, and quick, or I'd be spending a lot of time at the impound lot. And that was not a life I wanted to lead.

Robert Morgenthau

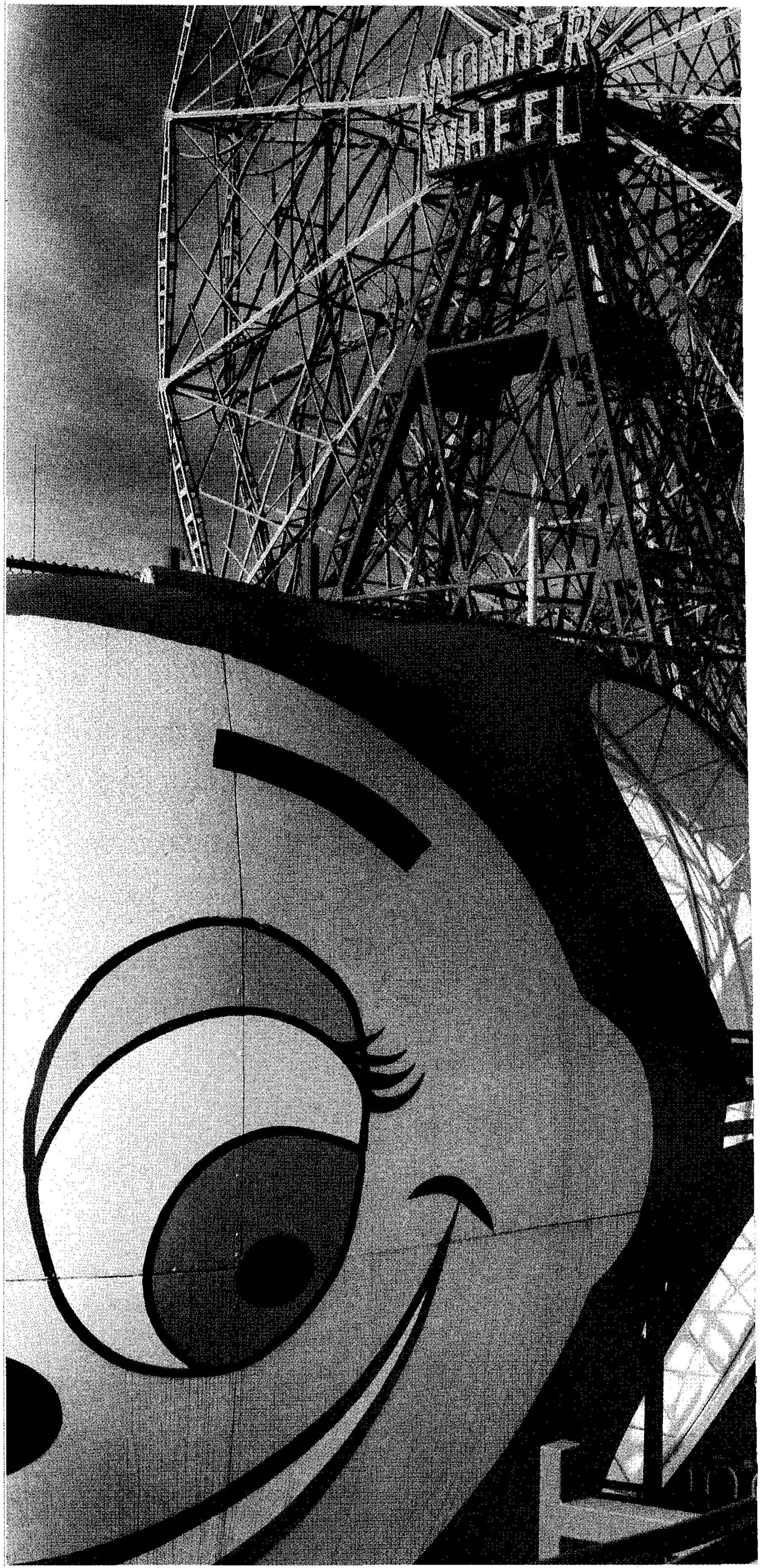
I remember going down to a Democratic gathering back in 1974 in the Amalgamated Houses on the Lower East Side. It was one of the early union-sponsored housing projects. It was about ten at night when I got there, I was hungry, and there was a lot of homemade food, chicken cacciatore. This woman gets me some food, and I said, "Is your husband a member of the Amalgamated?" And she said, "No, the Teamsters. My husband, Patsy, can't make it tonight because he has a bad back." We had convicted a Patsy Crapanzano for taking kickbacks and embezzling money from a bookbindery. So later I turned to someone else at the party and said, "Is that Mrs. Crapanzano?" And they said yes. And she couldn't be more friendly, and I wondered whether she knew who I was—the guy responsible for her husband going to prison.

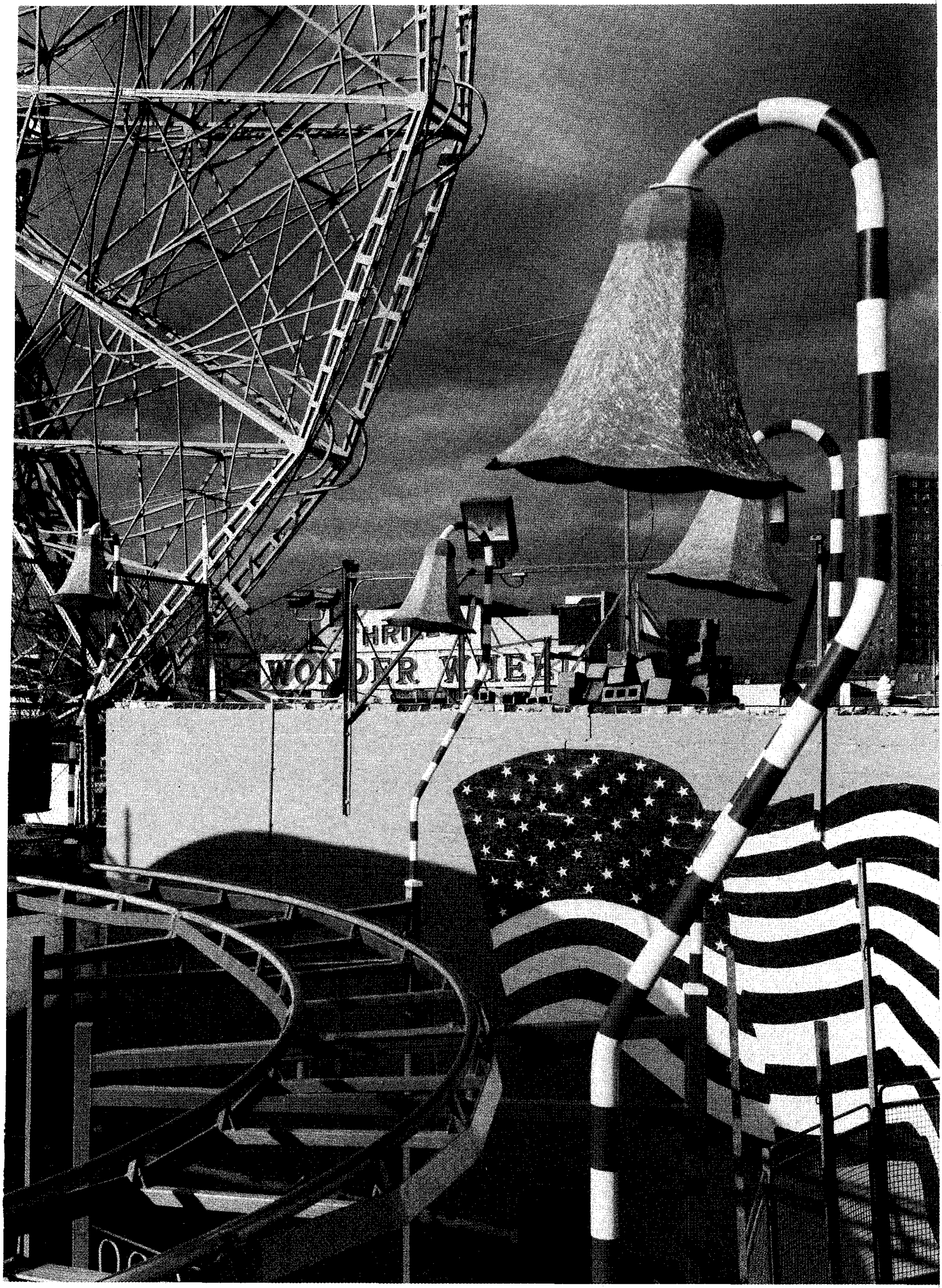
Francine Prose

A writer's vision, sharpened forever by **CONEY ISLAND.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG MILLER

Years before my friends and I discovered alcohol and psychedelics, a trip to Coney Island was the most efficient, the *only* way we knew to thrill and terrify ourselves into altered states of awareness. I couldn't have been more than 5 or 6 when I first experienced the amusement park's pleasurable terrors during a vaguely illicit excursion (my brother, myself, our housekeeper, no need to tell the parents) that included all the bloodcurdling delights (freak show, fun house, dangerous rides) from which fifties middle-class Brooklyn children were so carefully protected. The weeks of nightmares that followed led to a sort of addiction. From the minute my friends and I were old enough to ride bikes, Coney Island became our favorite forbidden destination. It was where we first sneaked cigarettes and, as adolescence approached, rode the Cyclone over and over, a compulsion most likely inspired by the same budding, inchoate urges that made so many suburban girls so crazy about horses. My leaving home for college coincided with Coney Island's decline into a place where the dangers were too genuine to be amusing. Occasionally, I still go back. I prefer the dead of winter, when Coney Island's melancholy, Pompeii-like desolation is unmistakably apparent, and when its resident population of ghosts is most fiercely restless and active. Of course, the ghost I am seeking is the ghost of my own past selves. Like some giant, tattered Ouija board, the ruined amusement park allows me to channel back to the child I once was, and still am: the girl, the adolescent, the adult drawn to the lurid and bright, to the bizarre and grotesque, the garish and the theatrical, to the roller-coaster terrors and fun-house darkness that, from the first moment I glimpsed it, changed my vision of the world, and left it changed forever.

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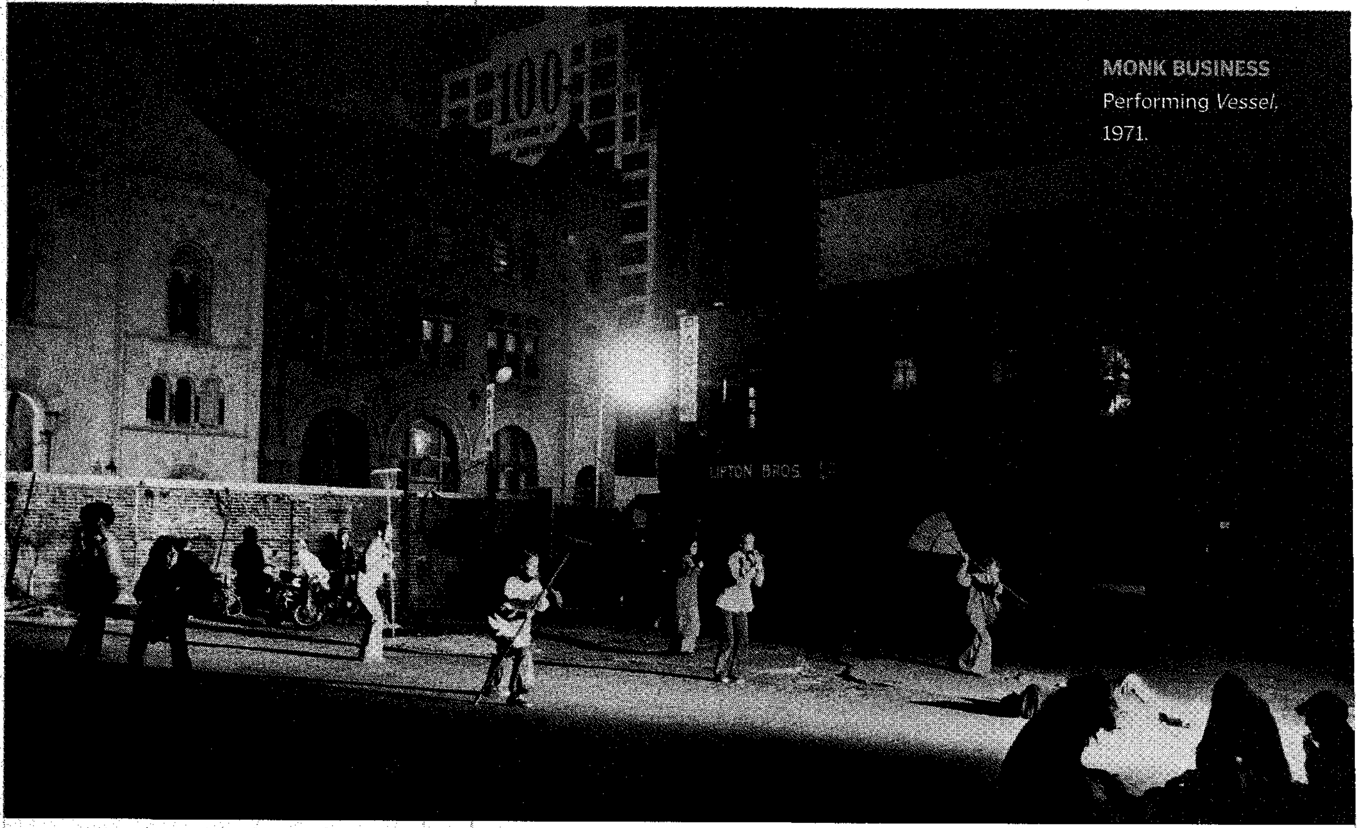


MONK BUSINESS
Performing *Vessel*,
1971.

Meredith Monk

To a performance artist, a **SOHO PARKING LOT** was better than a stage.

In 1971, I was working on a public performance of *Vessel*—which was an "opera epic" loosely based on the life of Joan of Arc—and I was looking for a big outdoor space. I was studying t'ai chi on Canal Street, and I happened to walk past this parking lot between West Broadway and Wooster Street, next to where the SoHo Grand is now. And I thought, *This is it.* At the time, the neighborhood was pretty run-down. It was an unknown area of the city, and, against this reality, I thought that if I placed these magic images there, you'd get this resonance, so that when people walked by the next time, they wouldn't be able to forget that.

The last night we performed it was Halloween. We had 150 people, ten motorcycles, a Volkswagen bus, a

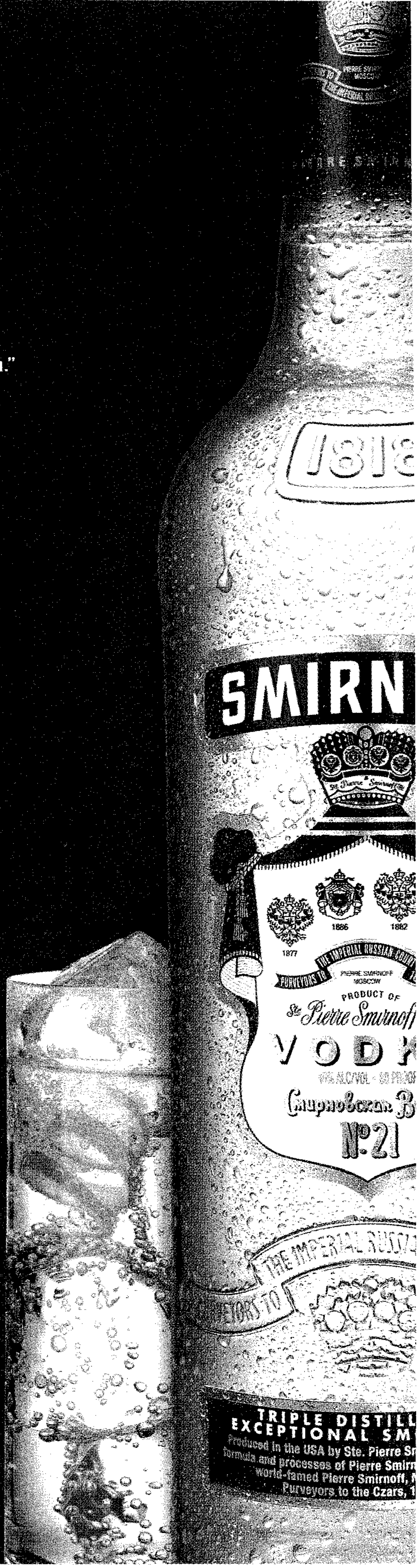
Ruth Reichl

When I was a kid, my father's office was above the Gotham Book Mart, and that's when the legendary bookseller Frances Steloff was still alive. My mother was working for my father upstairs and couldn't afford a sitter, so Frances would baby-sit me in the store. It was this wonderful dusty place. I just remember wandering through the bookstore and watching Frances greet these great writers, because she had such reverence for writing. I would come back and visit her while I was in college, and I wrote a cookbook when I was 21, so Frances filled the entire window of the Gotham Book Mart with my cookbook. But she said, "Now you have to write a better book. A real book." And I think that's part of why I did.

Photograph by Peter Moore.

"I've never seen a
Smirnoff bottle used
for a nose."

"That's not his nose.
I'm just chilling it down."


1818
SMIRN
1886
1882
1877
PURVEYORS TO THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN COURT
PIERRE SMIRNOFF MOSCOW
PRODUCT OF
Ste Pierre Smirnoff
VODK
Смирновская В
N°21
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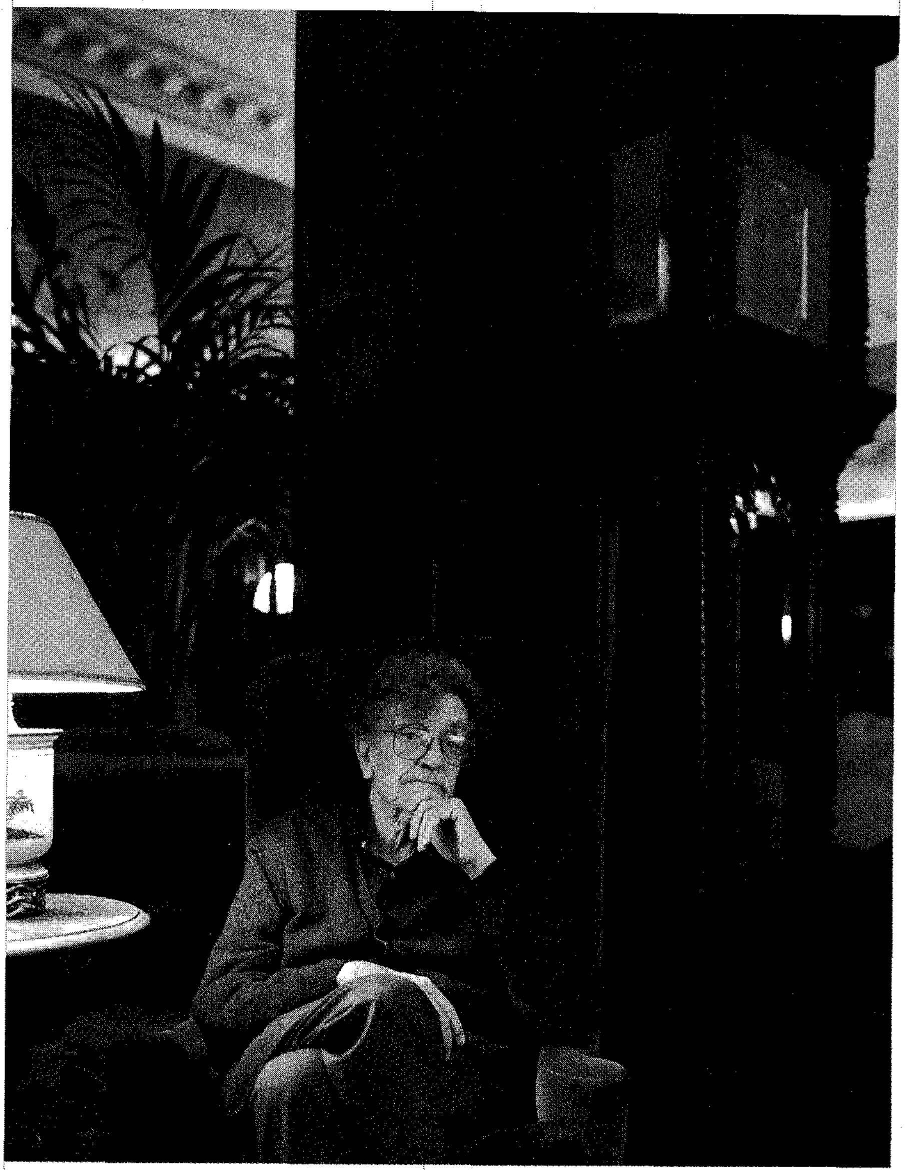
All Vodka.

Spanish dancer and a Scottish dancer, a welder, people up in trees, three people singing on the steps of the church that used to be across the street. The rain was pouring down and I was playing this electric organ—we put plastic over it. I remember lying there on the ground with the rain falling down and wondering, *Now what? Am I gonna be electrocuted?* I'm playing Joan of Arc, thinking to myself, *Am I literally going to go up in smoke, too?*

And I remember that somebody from one of the apartment buildings leaned out of his window and saw this extravaganza outside his apartment window and decided to sing a duet with me, right in the middle of everything. And, you know, that was fine. We just went with it.



Kurt Vonnegut

A Midwesterner finds literary welcome in the lobby of **THE ALGONQUIN** hotel.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GRANT DELIN

One image keeps looming and looming: the grandfather clock in the lobby of the Algonquin hotel. I'm an immigrant to New York, you see. I didn't come across the ocean, but I came up from the Middle West. And The Algonquin, for a Middle Westerner of my generation—I was born in 1922—was our imaginary literary hotel. In 1950, I was a P.R. man working for General Electric in Schenectady, delivering stories and so on to press organizations in New York. One day I just walked in, as anyone is free to do, but for me, well, I had the same feeling when I first saw Venice, which was, *Am I allowed to see this?* I felt at home there, and it remained a symbol of my arrival in New York and my home away from home, a beacon, a lighthouse for a Middle Westerner.

Frank McCourt

At **THE LION'S HEAD** you could learn to write by talking.

My home away from home was the Lion's Head Bar—which is gone now—down on Christopher Street. It opened in 1964, and it lasted for about 30 years.

I went there on its opening night—Paddy Clancy of the Clancy Brothers invited me. Before that, I would go to the White Horse on Hudson Street. But the White Horse was becoming too popular—every graduate student in the world would go in there and want to know, "Is this where Dylan Thomas drank himself to death?" The Lion's Head was more intimate. In the back room, the dining room, there was a big round table and we'd sit around there and sing till dawn. The food was terrible most of the time, but it was a great place to talk, and it had a terrific jukebox with jazz.

In a sense, it was our extended family. We'd all go in there when we were having trouble with women. We'd all weep in our beer and feel sorry for ourselves and exchange divorce horror stories. And then you'd move on to the next wife or the next husband.

It was a great gathering place for writers and poets and journalists. There were fascinating bartenders, one of whom was Paul Shifman, a poet, who I think was the only Jewish merchant-marine captain in the world. Norman Mailer would come in; in the early years, Bob Dylan; the Clancy Brothers; Pete Hamill; Vic Siegel and Mike McAlary—who died a few years ago—from the *Daily News;* Lanford

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Wilson, the playwright; and Amiri Baraka, the poet, whose name used to be LeRoi Jones.

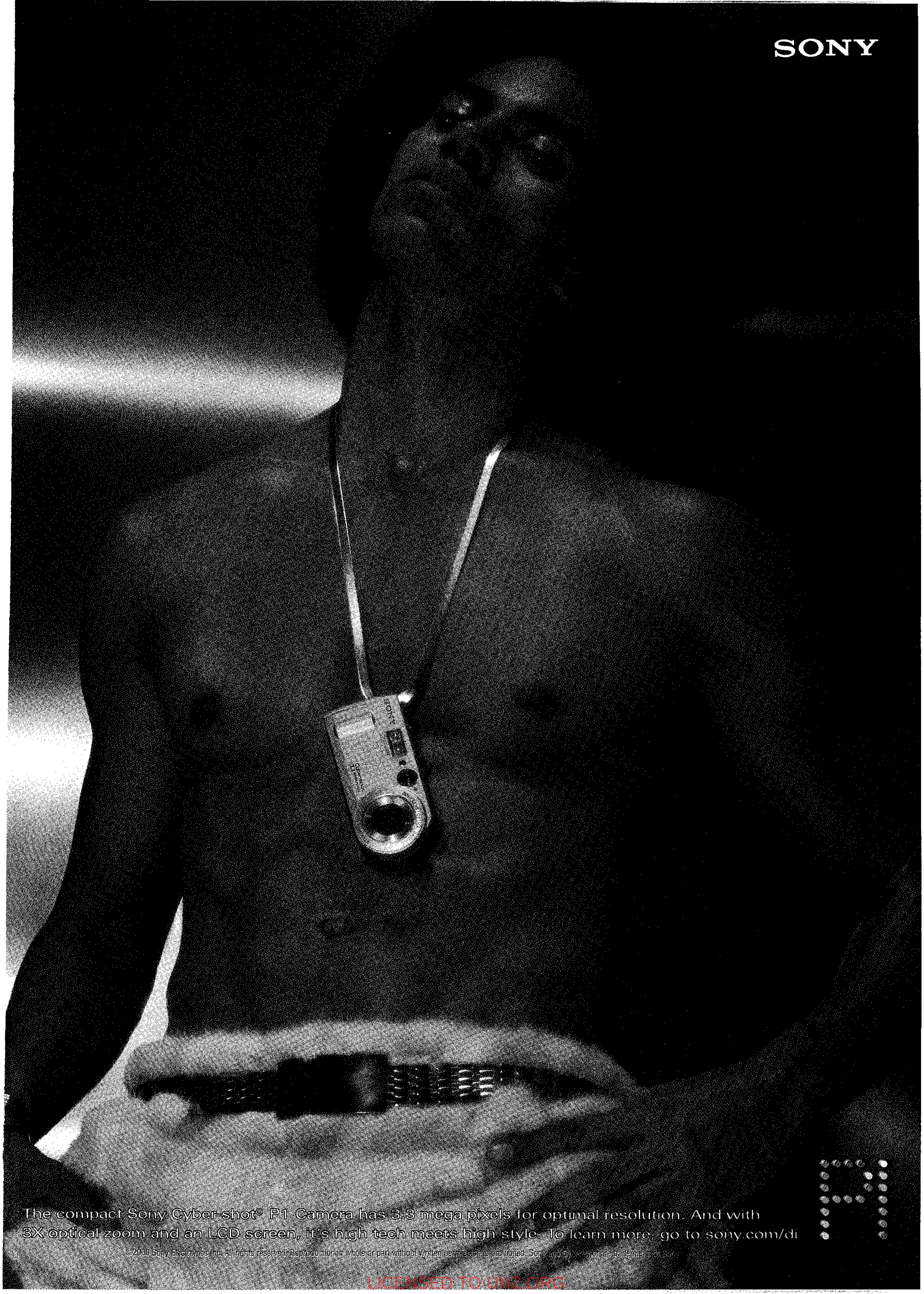
Bobby Kennedy went in there one night, and before he came they went into the men's room and erased all the graffiti. There was wonderful graffiti, and they erased it all because they wanted to look respectable for Bobby. One piece of graffiti was one that I'll never forget. It said, "My mother made me a homosexual," and under it was scrawled, "If I get her wool, will she make me one, too?"

Eric Bogosian

The city was falling apart—and from **43RD STREET** it was a pretty good show.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSICA WYNNE

I came to New York in 1975, when I was 22. I worked at the Chelsea Westside Theatre, which is now the Westside Theatre, on 43rd Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. I was a gopher. I made coffee. They gave me a tiny little room in the attic with the condition that I had to paint it. The room is still there today, with this little circular window. And every time I walk past, I can still see that window up there. Twenty-five years ago, the area was the absolute pit of New York. There was a garbage strike, a musicians' strike on Broadway, and the city was supposed to be going bankrupt. I had no friends in the city back then, so I'd just hang out the window and smoke joints and watch the straight hookers fighting with the transvestite hookers, yelling *Three holes are better than two!* or *Two holes are better than three!* I would eat at a gyros place, where I'd watch the homies come in and watch them steal éclairs right out from under the nose of the proprietor. Cops gave up on the neighborhood about eleven o'clock, and it just became a free-for-all, people getting their asses kicked in the streets. When I'd walk home, I'd try not to appear normal so people wouldn't screw with me. I'd hunch my shoulders and walk with a stiff gait and mumble to myself and make my eyes look a little crazy. But it was cool. I had this Silver Surfer mentality—I thought I was just coasting through all these environments and that nothing could touch me.



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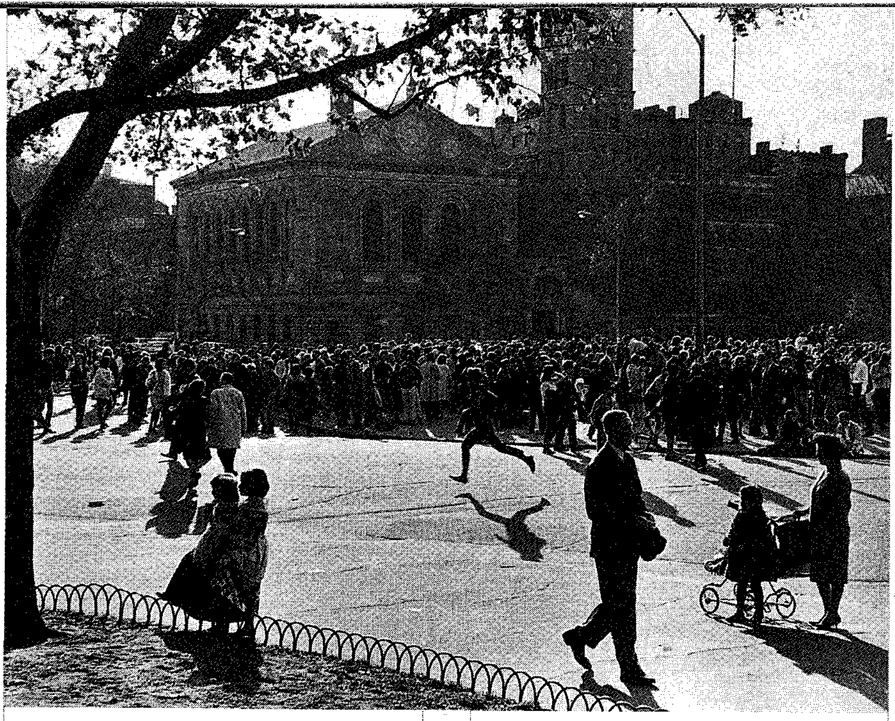

CHURCH POLITICS Protesters outside Judson Memorial, 1965.

Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah.

Susan Brownmiller

In a radical time, the staid old **JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH** was anything but traditional.

Back in the late sixties, many of us were busily going to meetings at one or the other of the two radical churches south of Washington Square Park. As a Jewish atheist, I had practically no acquaintance with churches before these two hubs of community activism became central to the raging political life of the city. I'd venture to say that most of the organizers and activists who draped the churches with banners and slogans—RESIST! FIGHT! END!—considered religion irrelevant and exotic.

Judson Memorial is the big corner church with the bell tower, designed by McKim, Mead & White in the neo-Italian Renaissance manner, just east of NYU Law School. Washington Square Methodist—now Washington Square United Methodist—is tucked into the seedier block between Sixth Avenue and the park and is a modest Romanesque Revival with four spires and a red door. A faint stenciled RESIST is still visible in the stonework. The few protest banners one sees today read NYU.

I got to know the Reverend Howard Moody of Judson in 1968 when I was writing a story on abortion for *New York* Magazine. All abortions were illegal then except for a handful of life-or-death cases, and Moody, a maverick Baptist, was trying to change that oppressive climate. His Clergy Consultation Service steered desperate women away from back-alley butchers and toward safe medical procedures on the underground circuit. Moody was deliberately breaking the law as a matter of conscience, and I think he hoped he'd get arrested when my story hit the stands. (No such luck.) Judson Memorial also attracted and nurtured the avant-garde, through Moody's associate, the Reverend Al Carmines, a pioneer in jazz cantatas and Off-Off Broadway.

Another abortion story, this one for *The Village Voice* a year later, took me to Washington Square Methodist, where the Reverend Finley Schaef presided. There, on a historic evening in 1969, I witnessed the Redstockings abortion speakout, the first time that women anywhere in the world actually stood up and "testified" about their unwanted pregnancies. (New York's State Legislature legalized abortion in 1970; *Roe* v. *Wade* came in 1973.)

Washington Square Methodist was a hotbed of antiwar activism in the Vietnam era, open to draft counselors, draft resisters, and supporters whose T-shirts proclaimed WE HARBOR FUGITIVES. When antiwar bomber Sam Melville

Carolina Herrera

"When I came to New York as a child, I was taken by my governess to the zoo—not the one uptown, but the one in Central Park, where the seals and the monkeys were. When I was not here, it was what I thought about, and every time I came to New York, I dropped by to see them. I was very impressed with the seals and then with the gorillas—I wanted to be taken every afternoon! But then they moved—they don't have the chimps there anymore. But I like monkeys a lot, and I still think about them every time I go by."

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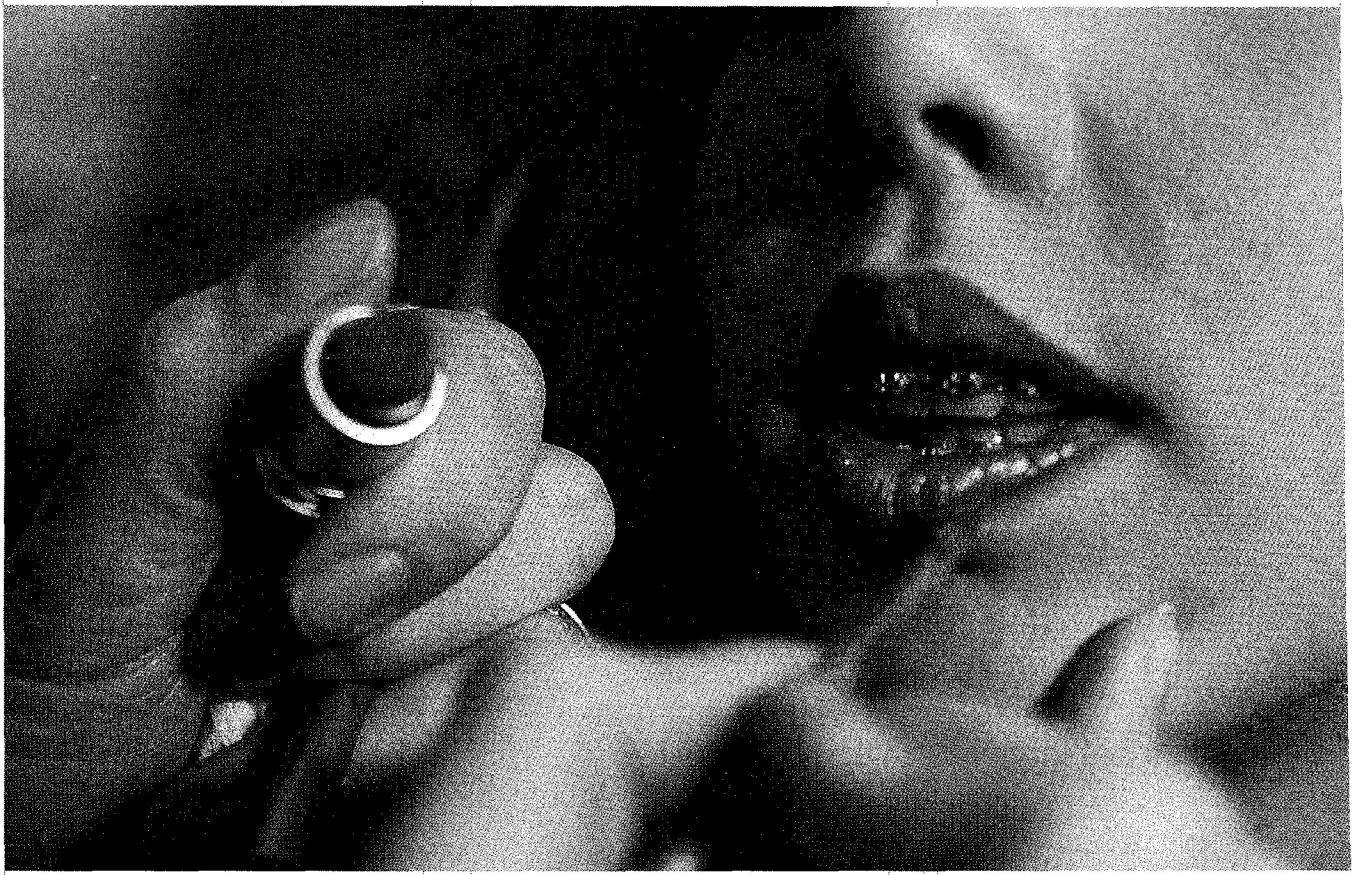


was killed in the Attica uprising, his coffin was shipped to Washington Square Methodist for the funeral.

By 1980, the radical churches of Washington Square had slipped off my personal map of inspirational places. "The sixties" were over. I mourn for that wondrous time when the city pulsed with new ideas for social justice and people gathered to work for a better life beyond the walls of their co-ops and condos.

I looked in on both churches recently to see what remained of the old spirit. At United Methodist, the Reverend Jacquelyn Moore explained that she'd been on the job for only four months and was consumed by roof and wiring repairs and the daunting task of rebuilding a congregation. (Chalk one up for feminism: Thirty years ago a woman pastor would have been unthinkable.) At Judson, the Reverend Peter Laarman gallantly confessed that he'd drawn fire over the sale of church property around the corner to ever-expanding NYU. "We're in bad odor because we're involved with the Evil Empire," he sighed. "But we haven't changed our values."

Lisa Birnbach

BLOOMINGDALE'S offered one schoolgirl an early taste of emancipation.

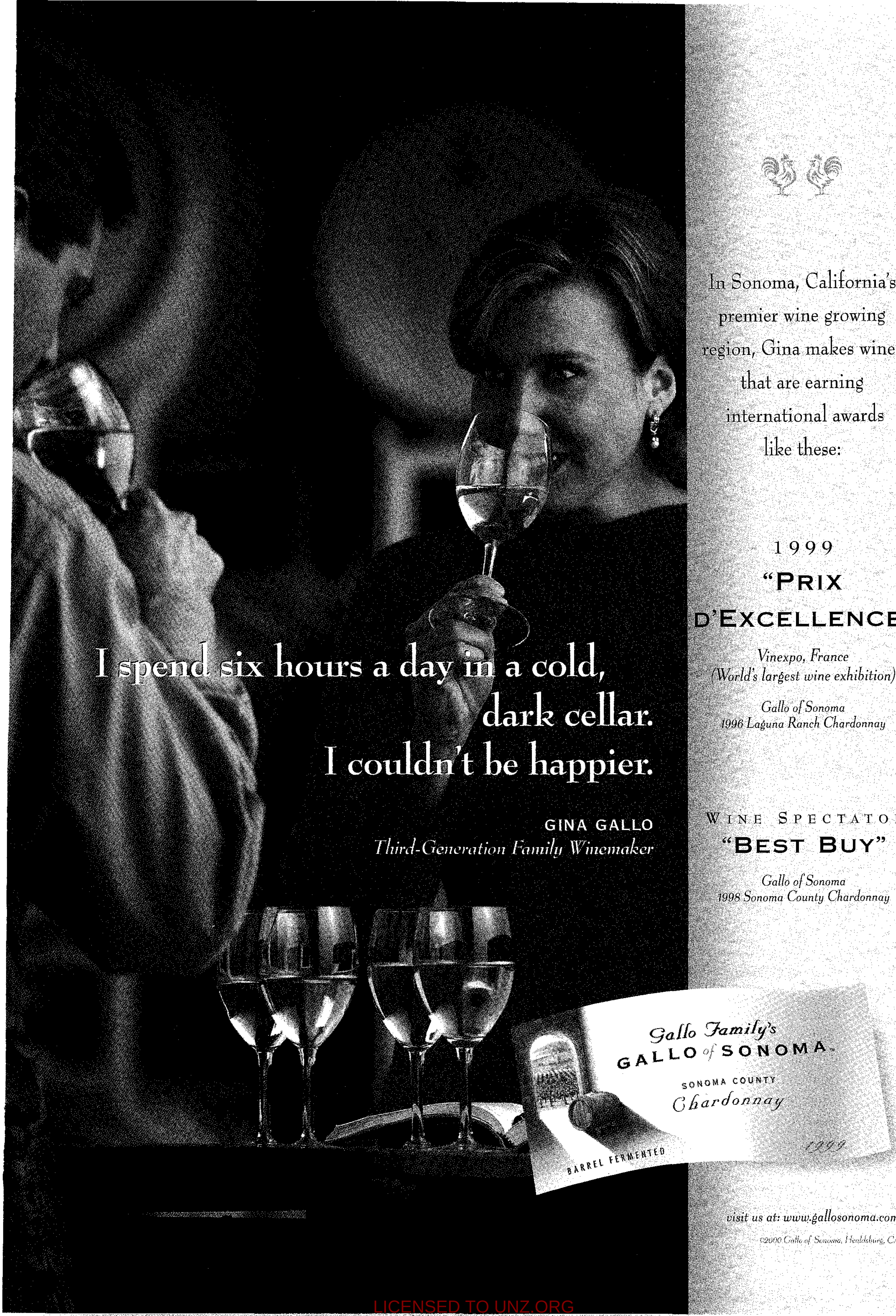
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK PETERSON

To a certain species of post–Henry Orient New York girl, going to Bloomingdale's on Fridays (we were all dismissed at midday) was an almost accredited private-school activity. This was before soccer. Trolling the makeup counters in my uniform was more or less my hobby. The point was not to actually wear makeup; it was to loiter with a minimal sense of purpose. Our stops always included the Yardley (pot-of-gloss), the Bonne Bell, and the Love's Fresh Lemon counters.

Our mothers knew where we were—they might even have supplied us with the desirable "My daughter has my permission to use my charge account today" note. We were familiar with the other department stores, of course, but we went to them with parents or other grown-ups. Bloomingdale's was ours. They still had a notions department then, so as a store it felt affordable. (You could buy a yard of grosgrain ribbon for 15 cents.) It was ten blocks from school, so we would walk there (a gym equivalent), and we would roam in packs.

Bloomingdale's was also the place where many New York girls experienced something thrilling for the first time. I'm not talking about shoplifting, silly. I'm talking about frozen yogurt. It is my belief that Bloomingdale's subterranean café, 40 Carrots, was the first place in all of Manhattan and probably the Western World to serve frozen yogurt. We'd wait in line and sit at the counter and savor this completely new food sensation for as long as we possibly could. We knew we were at the frontier of something. We could reinvent ourselves as sultry, emancipated teenagers instead of sullen, virginal girls in the uniforms we allowed to define us.

Being part of the cutting edge as we were—now ninth graders—it was time to jump into the brave new world of co-ed jean stores, and the best ones were all in close proximity to Bloomingdale's. My favorite was called A Different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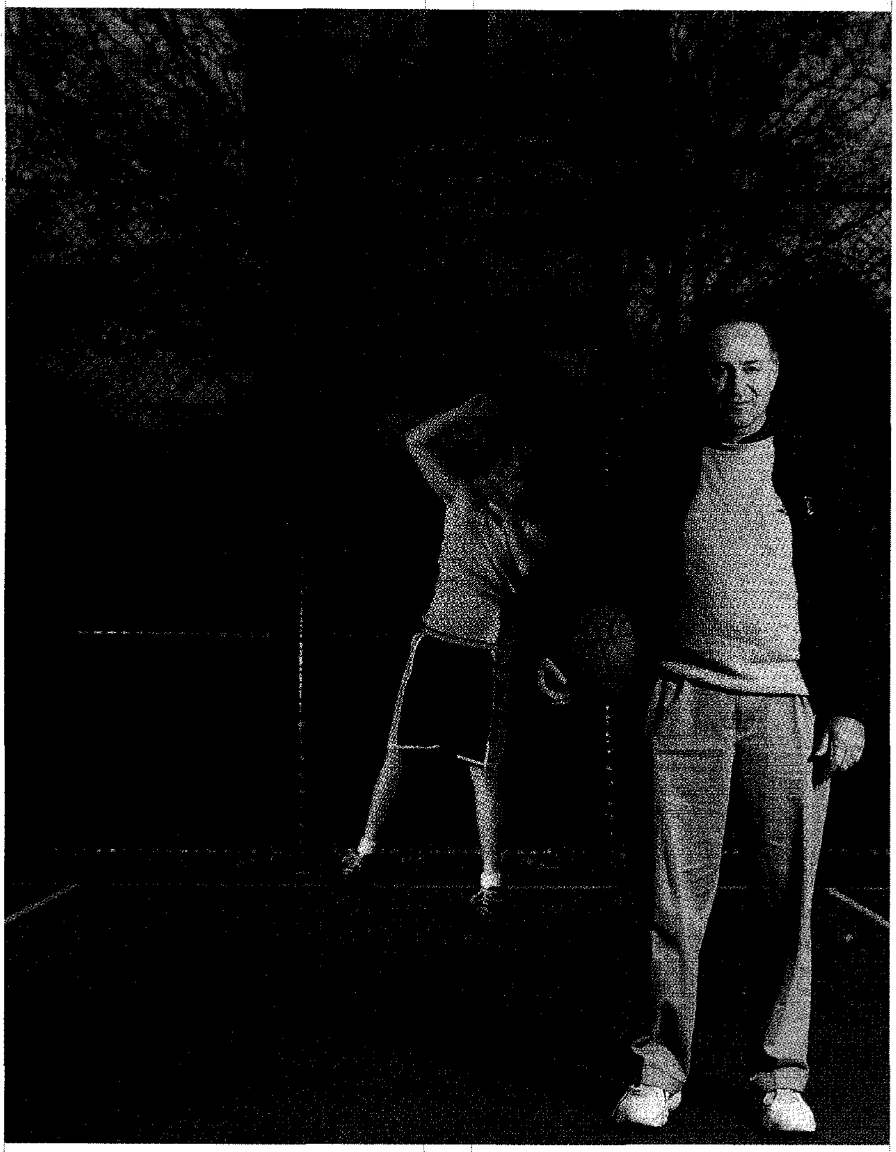
Drummer, on the west side of Lexington, somewhere between 58th and 62nd Streets. It was dark. Peter Max designed its paper bags. It smelled of patchouli and sex . . . whatever that was.

The Zombies' "Time of the Season" was always playing on its sound system when we walked in wearing our uniform skirts rolled up to mid-thigh and knee socks. A guy would look you up and down and, practically grazing your buttocks, say, "You're 27"—and hand you a small stack of Landlubber bell-bottoms. Oh my God! Then you'd go into the dressing room with a door that barely covered you and try on these new, skintight, flare-legged pants. And we'd have to wear them out with our uniform shirts! Do you understand? Our mothers didn't even own pants then!



Chuck Schumer

On the basketball courts at **MARINE PARK** in Brooklyn, New York's new senior senator met his future constituency.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA ARTZ

I spent most of my high-school days hanging out at the courts. We'd get there right after school and play until nine o'clock, and on the weekend we'd be up at dawn and play till dark. They were choose-up games, not leagues. There were kids of all different backgrounds, kids who had just emigrated from Puerto Rico and Jamaica. You made your own rules. These were toug games, but they were fair.

I'd say I had very good eye-to-hand coordination, and I was pretty good under the boards. But as one guy said when I did well on the House basketball team, "I couldn't believe someone could play so slow."

We'd take breaks at Kiegtans, the German deli, and I'd get a roast beef o a kaiser roll and a Nedick's orange soda. I would often drink a couple of malteds, too, because I was so skinny. I didn't want to get roughed up under the boards.

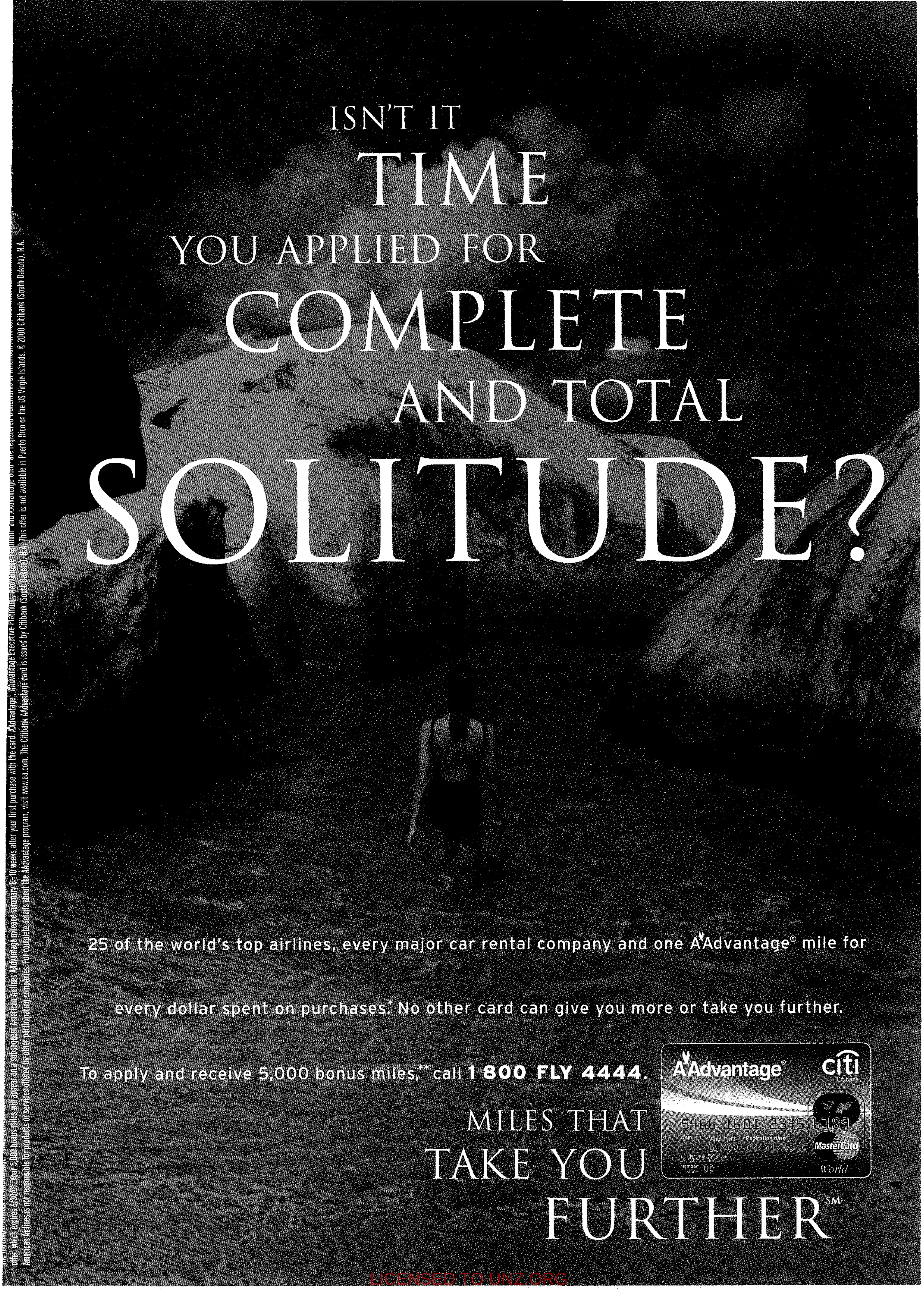
And that's where you'd try to meet girls; they'd come to watch. My first date, my first kiss, all that. I remember I met a girl who lived right there. We went and saw *The Ipcress File,* and I took her for an ice-cream soda and walked her home right through the courts. Now I drive by there and see the kids there. Life doesn't change.

Richard Snow

The world goes dark, and a **24-HOUR DINER** casts the city in an old light.

"The present in New York is so powerful that the past is lost," John Jay Chapman wrote not long after the turn of the century, and it seemed at least as true when I arrived at Columbia College in the late summer of 1965. After all, not long before, the city had lost the chilly splendor of Pennsylvania Station, and the 1964–65 World's Fair's vehemently modern pavilions were still caroling out their paeans to a radiant future. But Chapman was wrong; the past is as durable in New York as it is anywhere else, and I found that out one night 35 years ago in a diner whose name—the West Side? The HiWay?—lies beyond the reach of my memory. I'd gone all over town to get there.

The evening began with what I believe is the only moment of actual megalomania I've ever experienced. It



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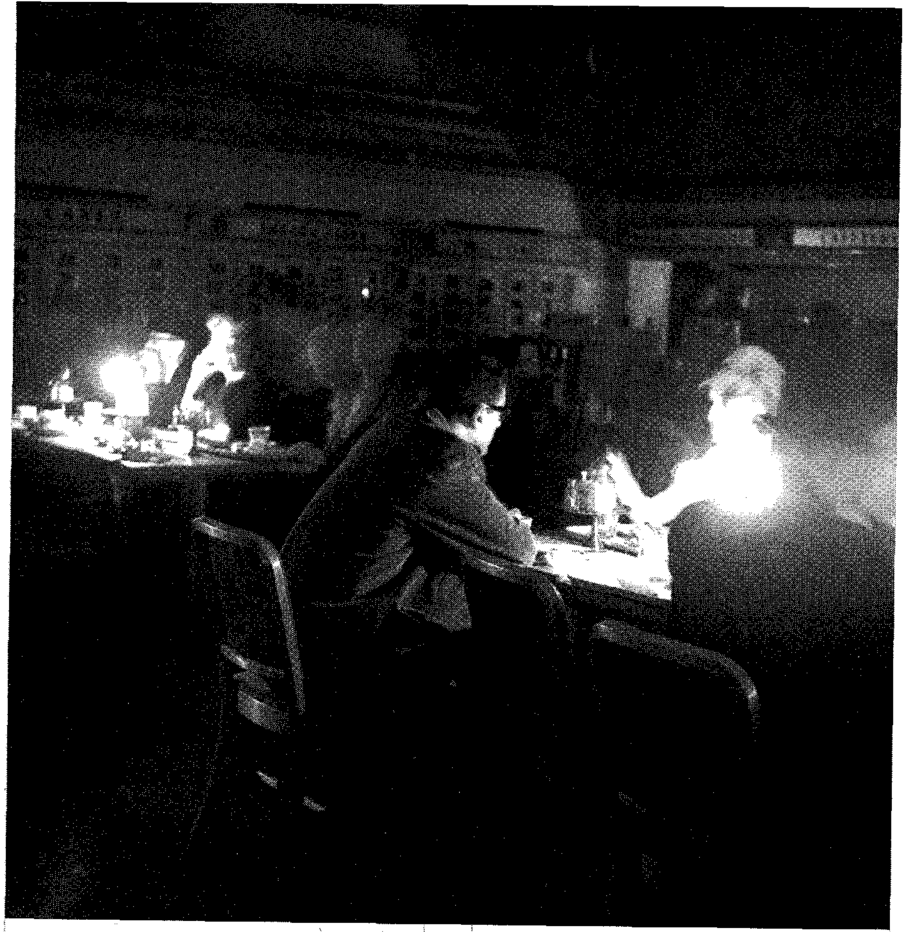

DINNER BY CANDLELIGHT The night the lights went out, 1965.

wasn't a bit pleasant. I was living in Carman Hall, the freshman dorm on 114th Street, where my room commanded an infinitely better view than any place I've been able to afford since: glittering acres of downtown Manhattan, the Hudson, the Palisades. It was a Tuesday evening in early November; my roommate had gone off somewhere after telling me in the sternest terms not to touch his electric typewriter. It was a new IBM Selectric, its little type globes in their jewel boxes, and I badly wanted to write my girlfriend a letter on it.

I resisted the temptation for about twenty minutes, then uncovered the typewriter, clipped in a ball featuring tricky italic cursive, and turned on the power. The machine hummed softly into life. I hit a key, then another; the ball darted and spun: "Dear Liz, I—" The typewriter made a sizzling noise and the keys froze. The desk lamp flickered and went out. I looked up at the window. The Empire State Building flickered and went out, too. Downtown Manhattan blinked and was gone; and then New Jersey went black. *Oh, God!* I thought. *I've done this!*

It was only a couple of seconds before I understood that my tampering with the forbidden typewriter had probably not caused the Great New York Blackout of 1965, but I've never forgotten those seconds.

"I felt I had been given a pass to the **ghostly city** that lies beneath."

Now there were brief blades of light under my door—flashlights in the hall—and I went outside and found a friend, Brian. Together we groped our way down the fire stairs and out onto the campus. I later learned that diligent astronomy students were hurrying past us to get to the college's small observatory and their one chance to see the firmament unbleached by Manhattan's imperial blaze. Brian and I thought we should go see what was happening downtown.

We got aboard a 104 bus (the subways, of course, weren't running), found it already packed with a high-spirited crowd, and crawled down Broadway where good citizens were ou directing traffic. We got off at the bottom of the park. As we walked past the Plaza, a full moon, big as a grapefruit and bright enough to make you squint, rose clear of the buildings and made Fifth Avenue a trough of cool, radiant light. We went on downtown, through the dark roil of Grand Central Terminal, the big, pale clock stopped at 5:16, and out past the little steakhouses of the East Forties, all seemingly doing a good business, diners sawing away at their chops by the light of votive candles. Down into the Thirties, over into the West Forties and a convivial bar where drinks—I've never seen this happen any other time—were on the house and I couldn't pay for my rye-and-ginger. Uptown along Ninth, then Tenth, some blocks crowded, some empty, all the black-windowed buildings looking like architectural renderings in the clinical, shadowless light.

Then we were at Riverside Park and hungry, and one of us thought of the diner. It was at 125th Street and the river, under the West Side Highway. It boasted about being open 24 hours, so we made our way there, and sure enough, it was open and busy. The power failure hadn't affected the gas supply, and pots were steaming over blue beads of flame. I ate a cheeseburger (which, mysteriously, came with string beans) and then sat there, tired, happy with the novelty of the night, watching the candles on counter and tables glinting off the corners of napkin dispensers and the barrel of the coffee urn; outside, the Hudson was going from silver to gray with the coming dawn. When the occasional car nosed cautiously under the dead traffic lights heading toward the highway, its headlights would show the fat rivets on the columns that carry the road.

I understood what had been tugging at some part of my awareness all night: that this tour of a city of dimly glowing restaurants; of clean, marmoreal build-

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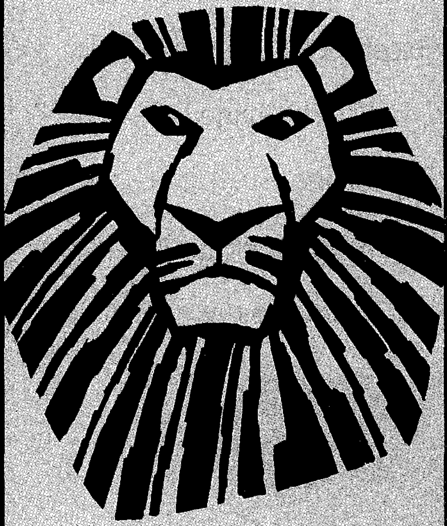

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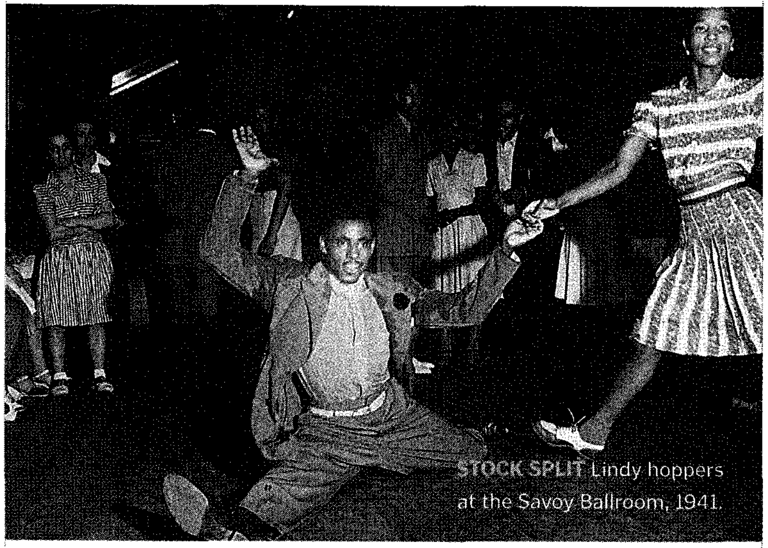
Merce Cunningham

"When I first came to New York, I was 20 years old and I wanted to go to the Savoy Ballroom. I was scared to death. I knew you weren't supposed to go to Harlem, but I figured out the subway map and found my way up there. I scurried very quickly down these dark streets and paid maybe $2 to get in. It was marvelous. There was this huge ballroom with these wonderful people dancing. Such marvelous dancing! I was so scared. I was standing in this little corner all by myself, and I started to shuffle my feet.



STOCK SPLIT Lindy hoppers at the Savoy Ballroom, 1941.

I kept my head down, thinking no one would look at me, and started doing the lindy hop. Well, when the song ended, I looked up, and a ring of people were standing around me, looking at me—and they just applauded. I was overcome. New York was so exciting—from the first day I got into it, I knew it was home."

ings; of the gilt trickle of window-lettering in passing flashlight beams, had been a visit to New York's past. Watching the counterman, lit from below, drawing a mug of coffee, I felt I had been given a pass to the ghostly city tha lies beneath the raucously self-consuming day-to-day one.

I've never left that city. It's there in the gray lumps of painted-over gas jets in an apartment-building stairwell, in the foundry date on a fire hydrant, in the staunch brass banisters that lead down to the tracks in Penn Station (the last remnants of Charles Follen McKim's masterpiece), in the suddenly uncovered wall at a construction site that bears a painted legend like: WACKLER AND BRINTON, LIVERY AND BOARDING STABLES, RIGS FOR HIRE, HARNESS FOR SALE.

The spot at 125th Street and the river is still a pretty good place to stop and get a sense of the heroic underpinnings of the city, but the diner is derelict and up for lease. I go by it now and again, always with a flicker of gratitude.

Wendy Wasserstein

A fledgling playwright and a fledgling theater, **PLAYWRIGHTS HORIZONS**, get their first break together.

In 1973 Bob Moss, the founder and artistic director of Playwrights Horizons, taught me how to drink coffee like a theater professional (bite off a corner of the lid so the bumps don't throw you). Playwrights was located in the Y on 52nd and Eighth. I was 23 and a first-time playwright; *Any Woman Can't* was about a Smith College graduate's first year in New York.

Three years later I sent Bob another play, *Montpelier Pa-Zazz*, hoping he'd remember me. He'd just moved Playwrights to the former Maidman Playhouse, a burlesque theater on 42nd Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. The International Body Rub Institute was upstairs, and there was a

Photograph by Charles Peterson/Archive Photos.

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massage parlor next door in what is now Chez Josephine restaurant. The audience always included a few stragglers in raincoats who thought *Montpelier Pa-Zazz* was, well, a different kind of show. I couldn't blame them. The front walls of the theater were still decorated with photos of burlesque stars like Honey Dew, who performed in sequins while swinging on a crescent moon.

That year Bob hired André Bishop to be the literary manager and part-time custodian; he read the plays and cleaned the bathrooms. By 1977, when my play *Uncommon Women and Others* had its first reading, the sex institute was gone but the neighborhood remained untamed territory. A citizens' group wanted to turn the entire block into a park, but Bob persuaded them to turn the buildings next to Playwrights into a string of Off-Off Broadway theaters. In 1978, Joan Mondale christened Theater Row. We took to the streets to honor her with a homemade show, starring Mimi Kennedy as "Joan of Art."

Not long after, Playwrights managed to buy its building, perhaps sensing that 42nd Street would become the city's most valuable real estate. This summer the building is being torn down and a new Playwrights will be built there. It will have two theaters, and the actors won't have to share bathroom space with audience members anymore. When I go to 42nd Street now, past the multiplexes and the gorgeously restored theaters, I remember Bob Moss in 1976. He was Neil Armstrong, planting his not-for-profit flag on the moon.

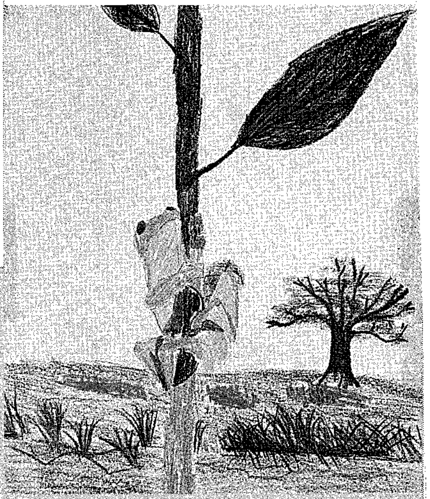
Lucinda Rosenfeld

For this young novelist, the **GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE BUS STATION** is the airlock to her Jersey-girl past.

Though I grew up barely five miles outside the city, in New Jersey, it wasn't until college that I got up the nerve to cross the bridge in a non-familial (i.e., non–Saturday afternoon excursion to the Museum of Natural History) context. And though I moved to the city after graduation, I still considered New Jersey home. I went there often—for dinner, or to play tennis with my father, or to raid the Hadassah thrift shop in Teaneck with my mother, having spent the previous portion of the day or night trying to pass myself off (usually unsuccessfully) as some terribly sophisticated young thing. The George Washington Bridge bus terminal became my parents' and my agreed-upon meeting and retrieval ground for such occasions.

In ten-plus years, not much has changed.

The favored routine is for me to catch the A train to 175th Street, where I walk a gently ascendant underground passage that connects the subway to the



THE NATURAL Rockman's early work.

Alexis Rockman

“My mother was Margaret Mead's secretary, as she'd say, or, as I like to say, her assistant. I was 5. So I would spend a lot of time at the **Museum of Natural History**. I'd go there once a week after school and wander around, looking at the Charles R. Knight dinosaur paintings. Every dinosaur that you ever saw until *Jurassic Park* was influenced by Charles Knight. By then I was pretty good at drawing. I would draw the turtles and frogs I had in tanks in my room. I'd draw little backgrounds to put behind the glass to imagine where they were. But my first attempt at painting was copying a Charles Knight. I went home and tried to copy one from a postcard or something and became enraged that I couldn't do it. I was so infuriated I never painted again until I was forced to in art school fifteen years later. The original attempt is in my closet.”

Photograph courtesy Alexis Rockman.

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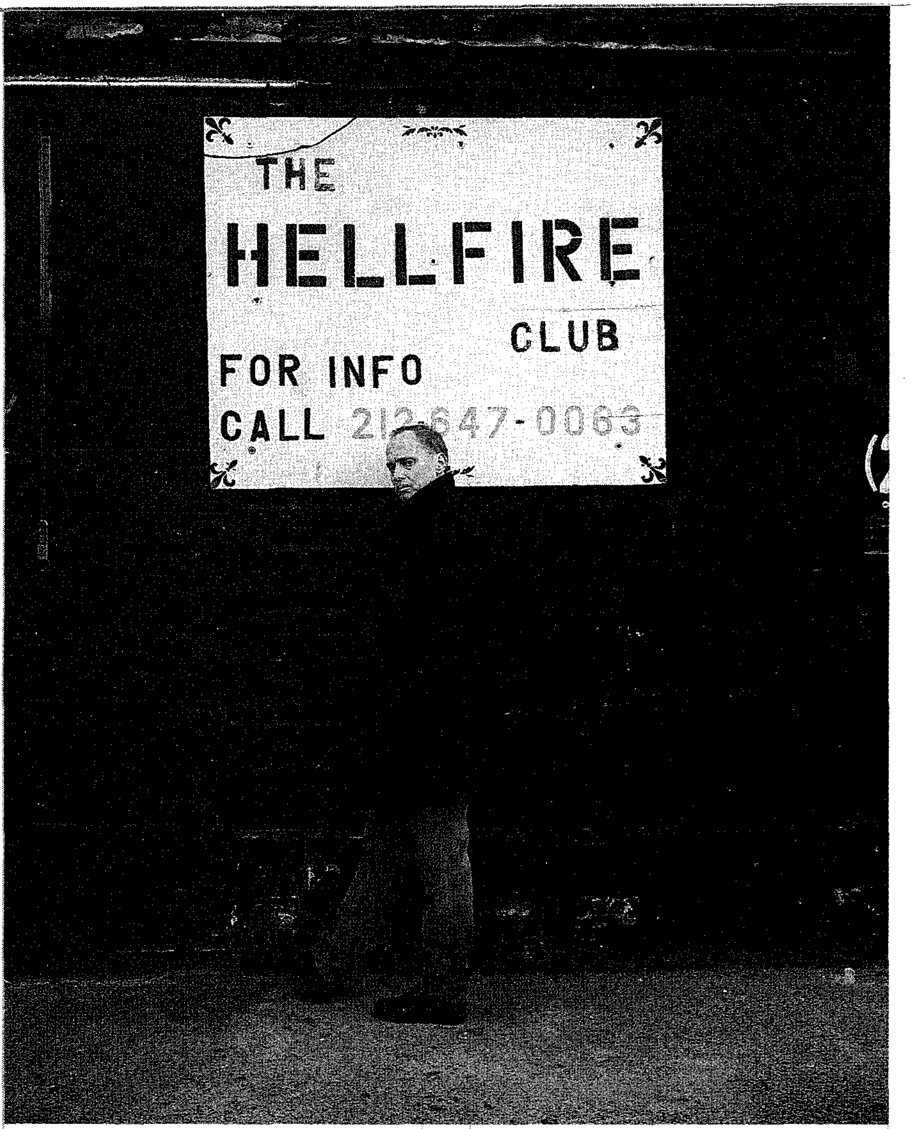

bus terminal, climb a flight of stairs, and exit onto Fort Washington Avenue, where—with any luck—my father's Chevy Celebrity is parked out front. In the pre-cell-phone era, there were plenty of times when I'd be unable to predict my time of arrival and would simply call collect from "George" on one of the station's public pay phones, which would be my parents' clue to come fetch me A.S.A.P. (Needless to say, my parents, who never turn down the opportunity to save 75 cents, always declined George's request.)

It was in those waiting moments that I came to know (and love) the G.W. Bridge bus terminal in all its depressive grandeur. The concrete, camel-toe-shaped mausoleum that sits on the corner of Broadway and 178th has its own kind of romance: the romance of nowhere.

Indeed, at most times of day, the place is deserted but for a few retirees shuffling toward OTB (the nexus of all bus-station activity) and a lone runaway leaning against the pay phones, sucking on a filthy-looking lollipop. Other regulars include an impeccably groomed white-bearded old man my father is convinced was a famous physicist in another lifetime. News and concession stands share space with a menacing-looking check-cashing joint called Your Friendly Neighborhood Credit Union. There is also an incense wagon, a bookstore filled with last year's best-sellers, and, most ominously, behind a windowless hardwood storefront, BRIDGE DENTISTS, begging the question: Why would anyone get their cavities filled at a bus station?

Over the years, the G.W. Bridge Bus Station's distinctly unwelcoming walls have served as a powerful reminder that, like most people who live here, I am not a native of this city, nor will I ever be, as much as I sometimes like to pretend otherwise. In that sense, it has been a corrective to certain illusions I like to maintain about myself. It also seems to underscore—if not undermine—my stubborn refusal to settle down and stop trying so hard.

John Waters

A young man from Baltimore gets a sentimental education at **HELLFIRE**.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW SALACUSE

Well, I always liked the club Hellfire in the days before AIDS, when they still served liquor there and everybody did drugs. It was the only S&M sex bar where both male and female heteros and homos of all classes mixed with abandon. Some people even checked their clothes into little lockers when they entered. I, of course, never did. I used to see Jerzy Kosinski every time I went, and he never checked his clothes either.

Hellfire made me feel relaxed and oh-so open-minded. You could be standing there talking to a slumming uptown art maven brought there by a bunch of raunchy gay friends, and suddenly you'd see an erect penis poke through a glory hole and hit her in the back. "Excuse me," she'd politely say, as she moved slightly to one side and continued the conversation. A lesbian couple I knew had a fight in the back, and when it became physical, a crowd of masturbators suddenly surrounded them, watching in glee. And using the bathroom—well, here was a real dilemma if you didn't know the geography of the place. One bathroom had real toilets, the other human. I always tried to imagine the water-sports enthusiasts on the way home after a long night in the bathtubs at Hellfire. Did their doormen ever get a whiff, and if so, were they too polite to comment?

The old days of Hellfire are long gone. But it's time to bring back some kind of shock to the nightlife in Manhattan. Come on Hillary, we voted for you. Get behind the opening of a new sexually mixed Mineshaft—it's your political duty.

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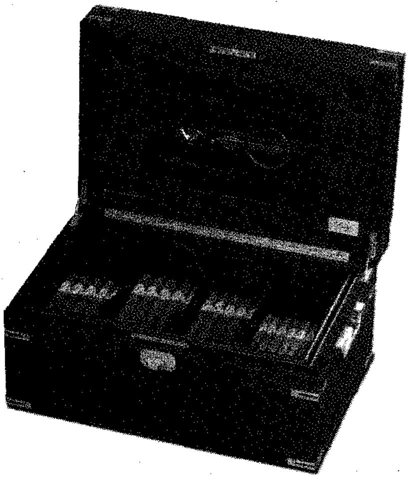

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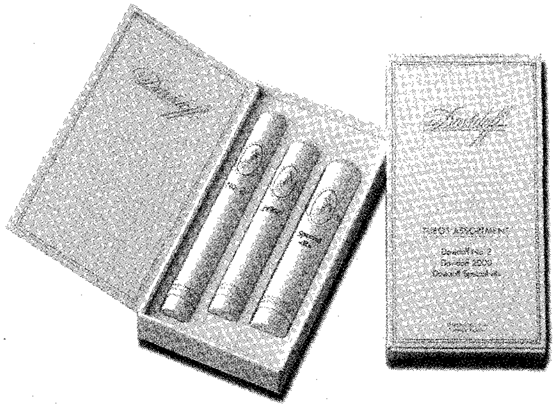

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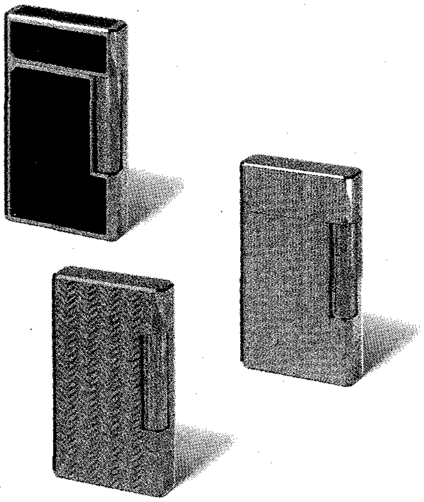

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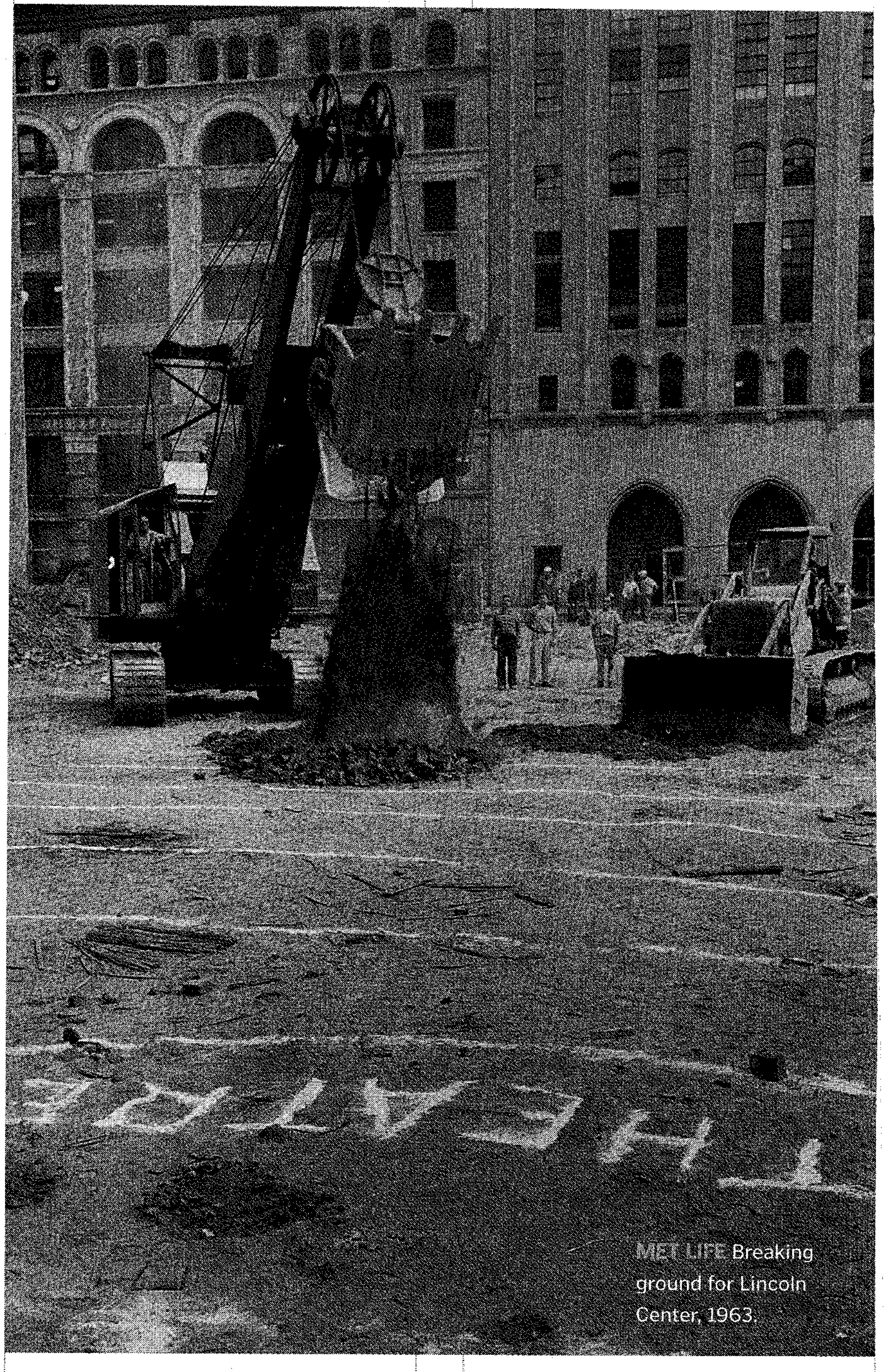
Arthur Miller

In the Depression, the playwright found work in an auto-parts warehouse in the slum where **LINCOLN CENTER** would later rise.



MET LIFE Breaking ground for Lincoln Center, 1963.

I worked from 1932 to 1934 at Chadick-Delamater, which is where Lincoln Center now stands. I was trying to save up some money and go to school and I made $15 a week. I remember my first day and my last.

It was a gigantic warehouse for automobile parts. The area was kind of a slum, with a lot of saloons, working-class bars, and boarded-up houses.

Anyway, they had never hired a Jew before. I didn't know that, but they put an ad in the paper for a stock clerk and I went over there and I didn't get the job at first, but my old boss—who I used to pick up parts for—called them and said, "This guy worked for me, and he knows more about parts than most of you guys, so if you don't give him a job there ain't anything but one reason."

So they hired me. My boss at the warehouse, his name was Wesley Moulter—nobody could make up these names. He was very dour, pasty-faced, very neat. There was hardly any heat in there in the winter, and it was a hotbox in the summertime, so he was constantly washing his hands in the one toilet we had for about 30 people. He would go down the aisles with a fresh-pressed linen towel over one arm like a waiter, and wash up four or five times a day.

"I was the only Jew. The guy who worked there after me was an Italian. **They hated him, too.**"

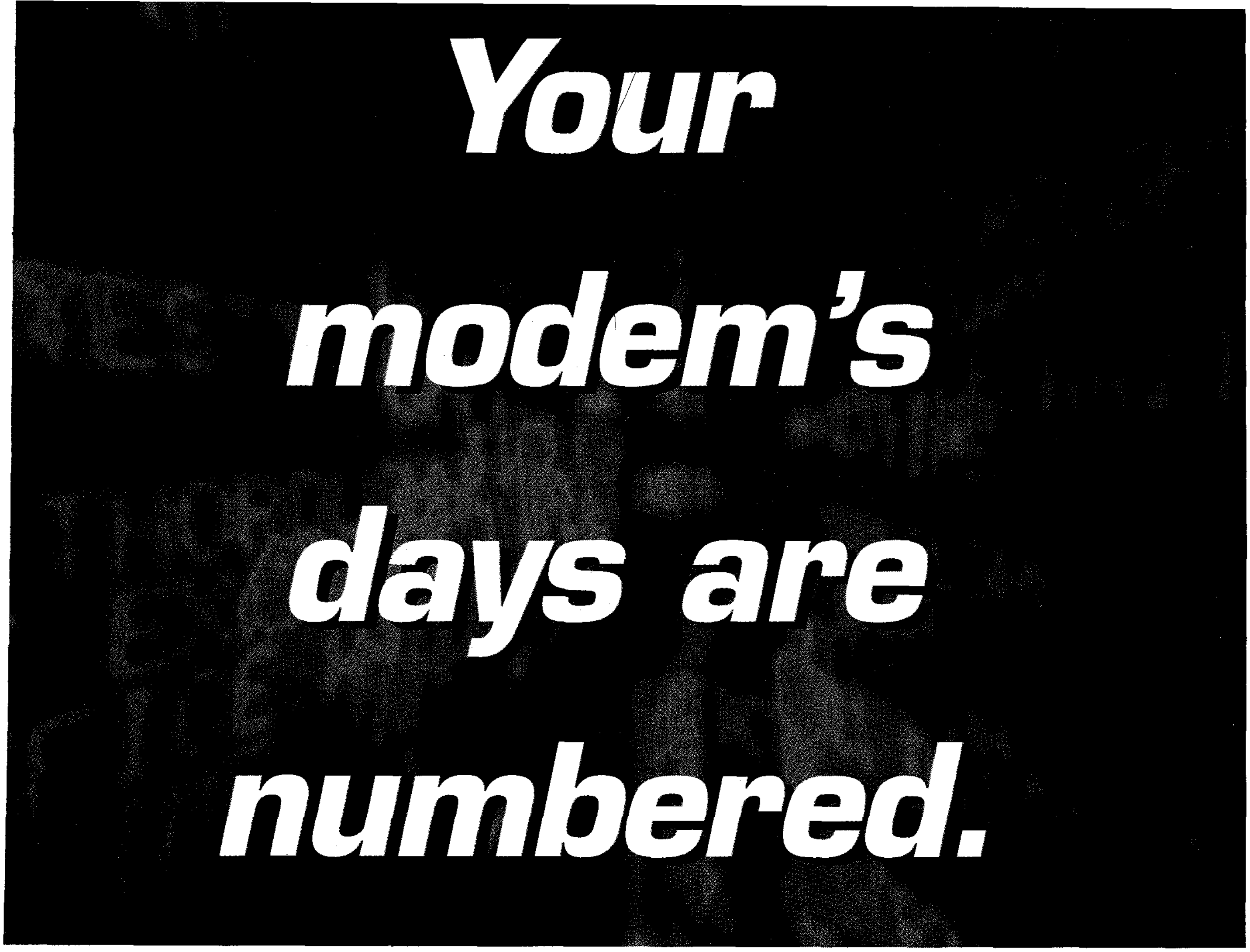
When I was hired, he just said, "Okay, you got the job." They didn't waste too many words back then. It was '32, so there were no jobs.

There were four stories of bins—thousands of bins going to the ceiling and falling ladders—and you had to fish out parts for cars that had been built as early as the turn of the century. So you got to learn a lot about engines and parts. My last day, I worked through the whole day as usual. And at the end of the day, I said, "Well, I'm leaving." They just nodded and carried on, except for one of the women who worked out front. She wished me luck. That was it.

I remained the only Jew they ever hired. The guy they hired after was an Italian guy, and they hated him too.

I stopped by a few years later, after I'd started to publish, just out of curiosity, and nobody remembered me—but I remembered all of them.

Photograph by Inge Morath/Magnum Photos.



The end is near. Alas, my dear modem, your slow, methodical, sloth-like, good for nothing ways have driven me to the brink. Soon, I fear, I shall smash thee to oblivion, and yes, I admit, I will dance the jig as your lethargic carcass becomes one with the earth. Farewell and deepest sympathies. **Call today and say "I'm not gonna take it anymore!"**

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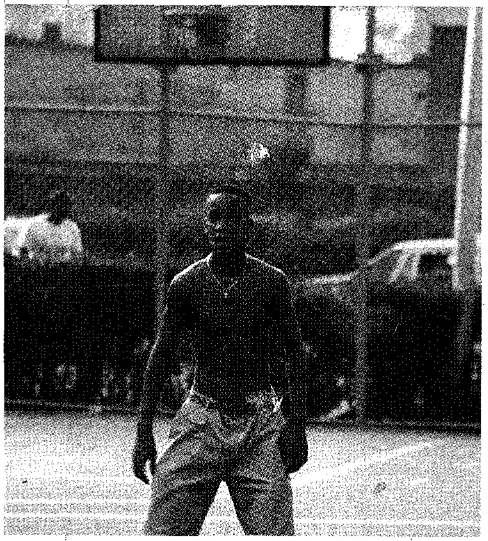
Stephon Marbury

The court I grew up playing on out in Coney Island is called the Garden. It's just a regular playground court, but playing there was the biggest thing, because it was the court that all of my brothers had played on. So you were part of a legacy—and you knew that all the best players from the neighborhood were going to be there. • My brother and I took over a tournament out there. It's called the Stephon Marbury Basketball Classic in Memory of Jason "Juice" Sowell. He played with me in high school. We won the city and state championship together. He was killed—he got shot in Coney Island. • The kids win seven-foot trophies and jackets, and big-time bragging rights. Growing up, I always was looking forward to the tournament and I know that kids now look forward to it the same way. It's like when you're about to get something from your mom and you're looking forward to it all day in school. You know, waiting and waiting till the summer comes. It's always a good day.



KINGS COURT Young Marbury at his Garden.

Adam Platt

A pan roast at Grand Central's **OYSTER BAR** is still this New Yorker's madeleine.

I was a visitor to New York City long before I was a resident, and even though I've lived here for more than a quarter of my life now, I still feel like someone who's just blown through the door and hung up his hat for a minute or two. Both my parents grew up in Manhattan, but my father chose a career as a diplomat, and as a child I lived a roving life overseas. But whether my brothers and I were camped out in Beijing or attending dysfunctional boarding schools in Massachusetts, New York was the city we came home to. It was the distant family seat, a place of tall, glittering buildings, odd foods, and eccentric natives wearing topcoats and fedoras. I felt then more or less the way I do now, like a sojourner abroad in a strange and foreign land.

My earliest guide to the city was my grandfather, a New York gentleman of the old school. He was an architect by profession and the first chairman of the New York City Landmarks Commission. He knew all the city's grand buildings, but his favorite was Grand Central Terminal. When I came to town, he'd tell me to meet him there, by the clock, under the smudgy, star-strewn ceiling; then we would descend to the Oyster Bar, which he seemed to regard as a kind of family cafeteria.

My grandfather went there for lunch, never dinner, sat at the bar, not the counter, and usually took his oysters raw or, if he was feeling lavish, gently poached in an oyster pan roast. The pan roast is a silky concoction, thicker than soup but gentler than a stew. It's made with cream, sweet butter, and Worcestershire sauce, plus a dash of secret chili sauce. The first time I tasted it, down at the bustling bar on a wintry afternoon, it seemed as mysterious and exotic as Peking duck.

Although my grandfather died long

Photograph: courtesy of Stephon Marbury.

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ago, the pan roast still tastes that way to me. It's one of New York's essential Proustian delicacies, on a par with the Coney Island hot dog. Like the hot dog, a good pan roast is built to be eaten quickly, in solitude, among crowds of strangers. Unlike it, however, the oyster pan roast is produced in its own officially landmarked shrine.

The Oyster Bar is hemmed in by other swanky food joints now, and there are seven pan roasts on the proliferating menu. But the oyster version is still the cheapest ($9.95), and the place to order it is still the bar, where you can watch an imperious chef mix the ingredients in steaming pots with a long, metal spoon.

When I ordered the dish not long ago, it took exactly four minutes to reach my place at the bar between a pair of British tourists and a Korean gentleman reading his New York *Post*. The oysters (always bluepoints) rested on a soggy mattress of toast. I took one steaming spoonful, then another. The soup tasted sweet and spicy, and a little like the sea. It tasted, come to think of it, like the comforts of home.

"The patrons seem as **odd** as I'm sure I am to them."

Michael Wolff

The **ÉCLAIR** set a breakfast standard that only one other spot can live up to.

There is such a thing as a proper New York breakfast. It isn't brunch, and it has nothing to do with power dining of any sort. You want to be set apart, catered to but left alone. It's a highly individual act.

For seventeen years I had my solitary breakfast each day at the Éclair on West 72nd Street. During this time, it went from a period piece of Eastern European–Jewish–West Side–ishness (I. B. Singer often had his breakfast here) to a crumbling tomb. By the end, the customers were the same people who had been there seventeen years before, but who hadn't died yet (now they're probably all gone).

We moved to the East Side shortly after the demise of the Éclair (and the rise of Starbucks), where I began anew the search for my kind of ritualized, possibly obsessive-compulsive, highly waited-upon New York breakfast.

You don't want a fashionable or reviewed place. You don't want to struggle to have to make eye contact with waiters and waitresses. You want everything to yield and to appear and to be refilled without your having to ask for it—or even think about it. Indeed, you want what you want when you want it. I myself like some history. (Tommy Wilhelm, from Bellow's *Seize the Day*, for instance, living at the Ansonia, would surely have had breakfast now and again at the Éclair.) Ideally, it's a place that could only exist in New York (although it should be a little European).

Obviously, I can't tell you where I go now (you can't get a true New York breakfast in places written about in magazines). But it fits all of the above criteria. It is very only-in-New York–ish (New York via Milan in the fifties). The décor is Venini-manqué modern, saved from being just purely vulgar by various unconscious Fellini touches (the back room is rather grandly coffinlike). There is a fine croissant with a silky apricot filling. The manager is a stern, House of Savoy sort of figure. The other patrons seem to be as odd and unidentifiable as I'm sure I am to them. Sometimes people walk in and ask for a coffee to go—that, they are told, is not something done here. But, in general, most people look and linger and walk on. There is something off-putting, circumscribed, snob bish, peculiar. It lacks a certain con temporary commercial sense. It is ver much at ease with its own eccentric ties, as well as mine.

Which is a condition that may exist i other places, but which, in my experienc you can only really count on in New Yor

George Kalogerakis

What if **YANKEE STADIUM** were your local neighborhood playground?

If you grew up on East 161st Street in the Bronx, as I did, the *Yankee* in Yankee Stadium was silent. To us in the neighborhood, this massive pale-green structure, with the elegant frieze hanging from the grandstand and a tendency to emit the occasional unearthly roar, was simply "the stadium." We had a movie theater, a candy store (a candy "staw," to be precise), a pizzeria, a library . . . and a 75,000-seat major-league ballpark. Big deal. Didn't everybody? For most of my childhood, there was even a *second* one of those things within view: the Polo Grounds, just across the Harlem River.

Directly across the street from the stadium was Macombs Dam Park, where I played for the Bombers in the Stadium Little League and took up running on the quarter-mile cinder track. Just up the hill, I learned to ride a bike by tracing wobbly circles around the Bronx County Courthouse. On the other side of 161st, flanked by Lou Gehrig Plaza and Babe Ruth Plaza, was my front yard: Joyce Kilmer Park, through which I ran with a gang of embarrassingly well-behaved 10-year-olds who terrorized no one and were ourselves deeply wary of Chuck, the dyspeptic Good Humor man.

The stadium, and the neighborhood it sat in, wasn't merely a destination for professional baseball teams seeking elimination. For years it was also the ill-fitting home field of the football Gi-

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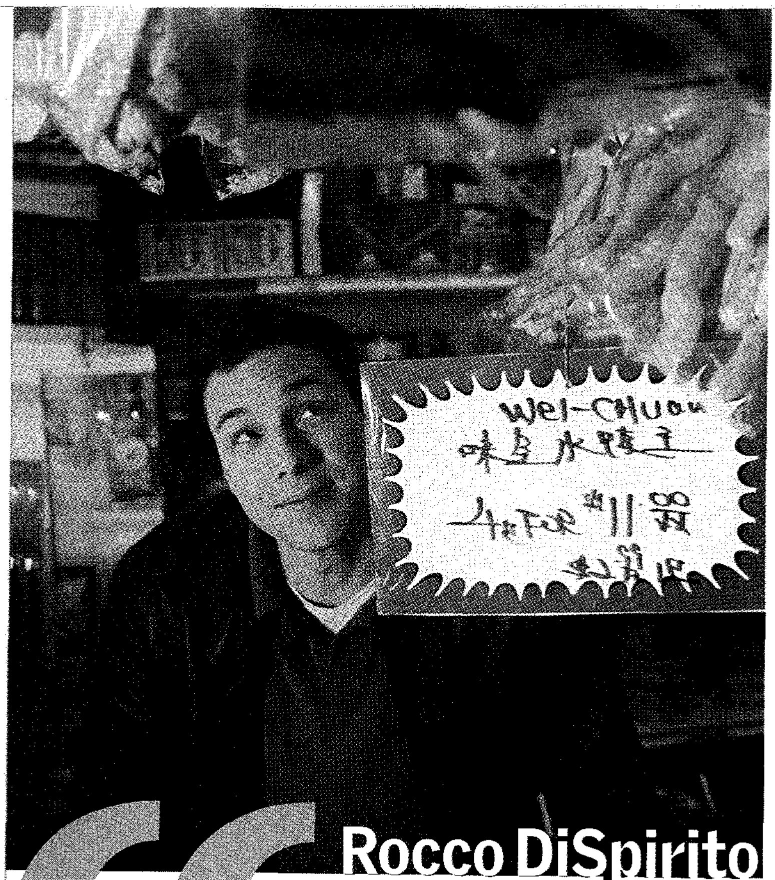


Rocco DiSpirito

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ALEX TEHRANI

Chinatown is a source of fascination for just about every cook in town. It's where I found myself as a chef and really started to develop my own Union Pacific style. It embodies all the elements I try to work into my food: ethnic cooking, a myriad of ingredients, exotic flavors. I go there when I am looking for inspiration. One of the first things I remember finding was little tiny dried shrimp—it really adds complexity to anything you're working with. For me, the **Hong Kong Supermarket** is a miniature Chinatown; I like to go in and ask the guys about some of the strange produce I find there. Sometimes they speak to you; sometimes they get really annoyed with your questions. But with a little tenacity, eventually you get a little information out of them.

ants, and my childhood sports fantasie reached a miraculous apogee when the splendid safety Carl "Spider" Lockhart moved *into my building.* I saw Pelé play soccer at the stadium, and glimpsed Pope Paul VI tooling along the Grand Concourse in his bubble-topped Popemobile after celebrating Mass there. From the vantage point of my father's shoulders, I watched JFK campaign for president, riding up 161s Street in an open car; two days after hi assassination, I was part of a numbed crowd at a Giants game when word spread through the stadium that Oswald had been shot.

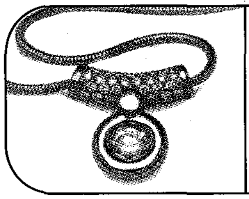
As a teenager, I would sometimes turn up hours early to wait for Yankee autographs outside the players' parking lot (Fritz Peterson! Roy White!), then install myself in the right-field boxes during batting practice, scrambling futilely among the seats for ersat home-run balls. But my most vivid memory is pretty pure: Mickey Mantle launching a late-inning, game-winning home run way, way up into the left-center bleachers one night, an astonishing drive made no less thrilling because Mantle was near the end of his career and the Yankees were near the end of a dismal season.

The stadium has changed—that mixed blessing of a renovation in the seventies—and so has the neighborhood. But it's still a neighborhood ballpark. From the grandstand, I can see the park and the courthouse, and also the first two apartments I ever lived in—even my old bedroom window.

A few years ago, I met Yogi Berra, and he beamed when I told him where I'd grown up. Like a lot of players, he'd once lived in the Concourse Plaza Hotel, across from Joyce Kilmer Park and next door to my own building. "Awww," he said, "the park was beautiful then."

It was? Joyce Kilmer Park? Briefly, insanely, I wondered what charm that unremarkable rectangle, patrolled by a testy ice-cream vendor and infested with library-card-packing hooligans, could have possibly held for the Hall of Fame catcher. Then I understood: the ballpark, our neighborhood *ballpark.* And Yogi was right: It was beautiful.

no chimney required



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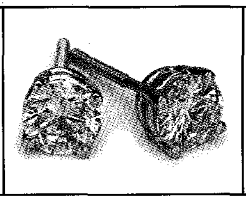

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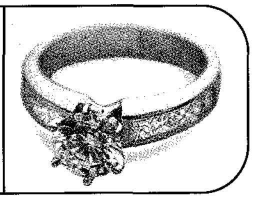

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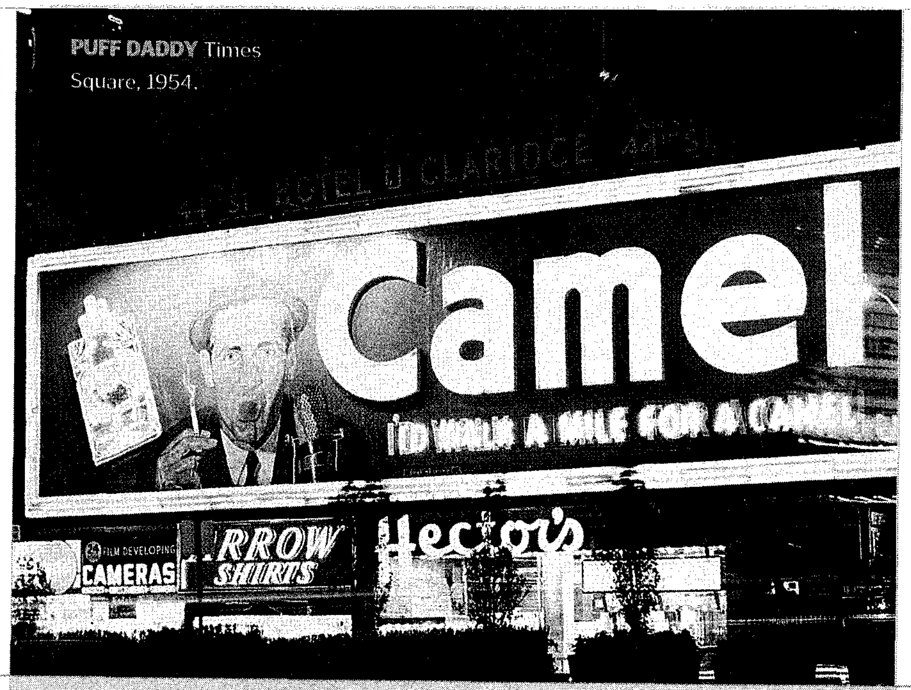


PUFF DADDY Times Square, 1954.

Ping Chong

Because I grew up in Chinatown, I was always a tourist in Times Square—I rarely went, so it was still the Great White Way to me. I remember these amazing things—when the Astor Hotel held the opening for the film *The Vikings,* and they had this huge cutout of a Viking ship with pictures of the stars in medallions on it and oars that were moving across the front of the hotel. And I remember the old Pepsi-Cola display, which was a block-long waterfall of Pepsi-Cola. Don't ask me how it was done. I don't know if it was really Pepsi-Cola, but it looked like Pepsi-Cola. It did! It was amazing. A Niagara Falls of Pepsi! Then there was the Camel sign with smoke coming out of a guy's mouth and the burlesque houses, the Broadway theater, movie palaces, and the Flea Circus up there, with little fleas! I loved it. I guess I'm attracted to spectacle; my family came from Chinese opera.

Claudia Shear

For the star of *Dirty Blonde,* a traffic jam on the **WILLIAMSBURG** is still a treat.

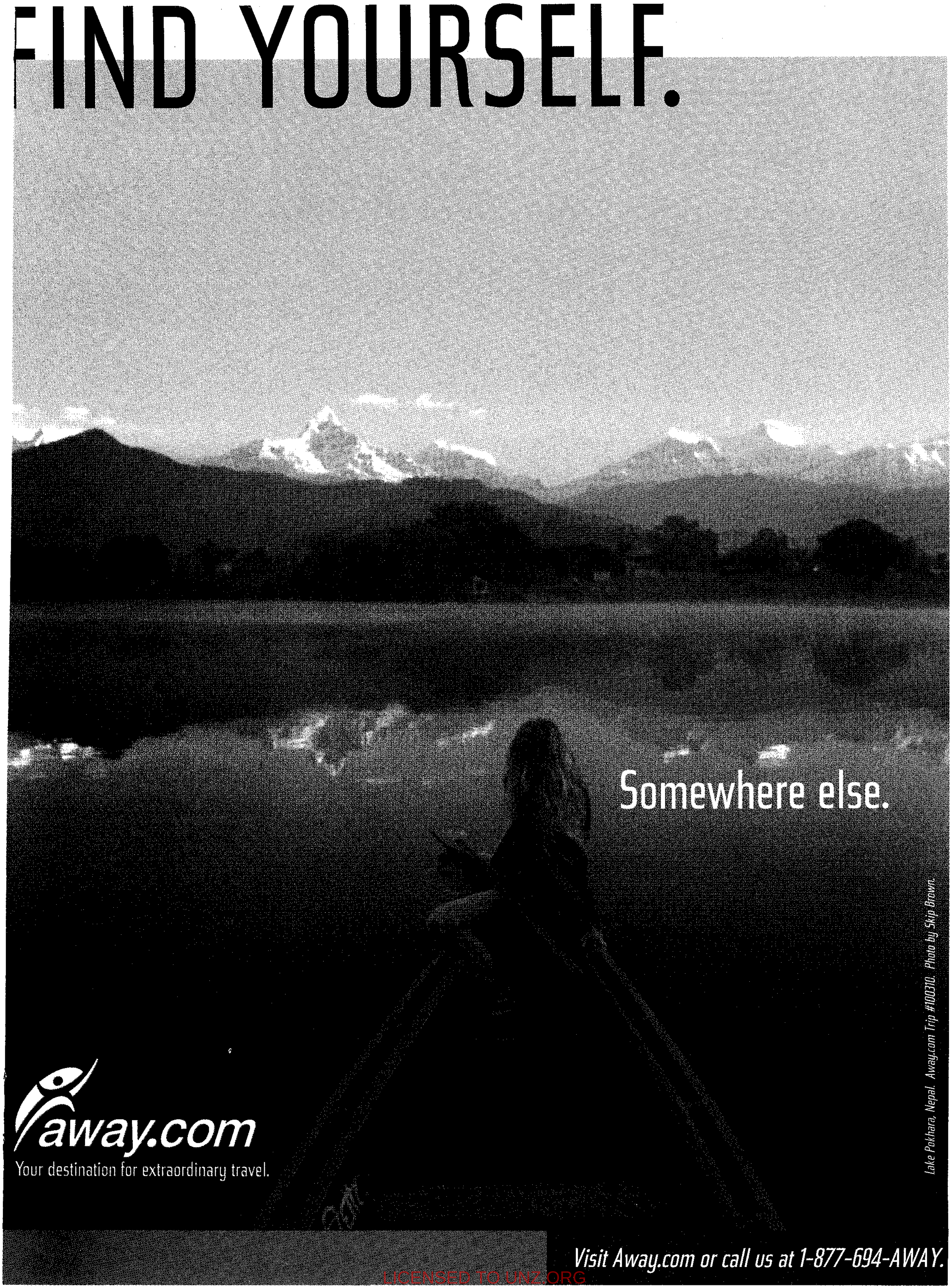
I've lived all my life in New York; I am formed of it, the warp and weft of each block, light, pay phone. In fact, due to my peripatetic job history, between Water Street and 96th Street I can stand on any corner and point to somewhere I have worked within a five-block radius. There's almost no corner where I haven't cried, laughed, made a phone call, bought a soda, met a friend.

And so many landmarks: Backstage at the Helen Hayes, The Public Theater (my adolescent temple), New York Theatre Workshop. The many sanctuaries of the Public Library, the fantasy of the Frick, corners of color and peace at MOMA. My being born in Brooklyn swells the list—Coney Island, Spumoni Gardens, Shore Road, BAM, Kings Highway, Junior's. But sometimes I need distance, perspective. And I find it in the outside lane of the Williamsburg Bridge heading toward Manhattan. The only bridge with a nickname (the Willie B), it's a humble, crumbling span that faces the swath from Stuyvesant Town up to the 59th Street Bridge, the heart of Manhattan, what you think of when you think of New York: Empire, Chrysler.

Heading in on the bridge, the city stretches out like a scimitar of light and mass; it is all anticipation, all unknown—what will happen today on this shift, at this party, on this date, at this performance?

And because of the eternal state of construction and traffic, there is ample time for reflection and contemplation. It's the perfect spot for me: Brooklyn at my back and the city ahead. Suspended, I'm connected to my past and my present, and sometimes there is a moment when I see that this is where I live, where my life is happening. And I never fail to feel the wonder of "so many . . . possibilities."

Photograph by Archive Photos.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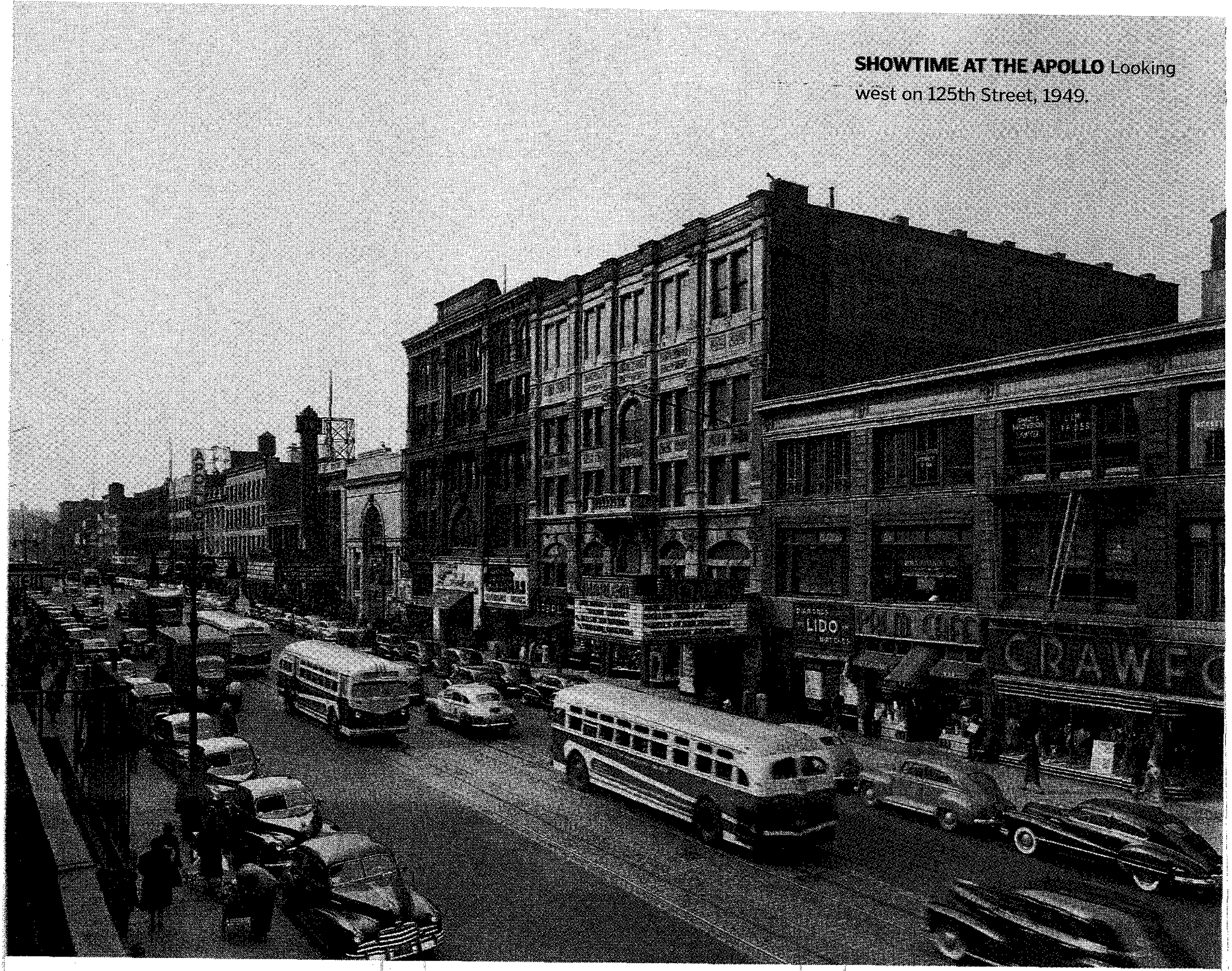


SHOWTIME AT THE APOLLO Looking west on 125th Street, 1949.

Charles Rangel

For a future congressman growing up in Harlem, **LENOX AVENUE** sizzled.

I started working when I was 8 or 9 years old, on Lenox Avenue. I'd be working in the Model drugstore on 133rd Street, and I'd run across to the Rendez-Vous, the nightclub on the corner of 133rd Street, where they had the dancing girls, to bring them their theatrical makeup. Because I was a kid, no one paid me any attention, and they'd be there in various states of undress. Dancing girls. Hot damn! I was bringing more theatrical makeup over there than they ever asked for. The guy there knew what I was doing, but they loved me and I loved them. People would come in with black eyes and I'd leech them, I'd pump castor oil from a 40-gallon can—all these home remedies. Doc would tell me what to do; I was the little doc.

Everybody on Lenox Avenue knew me, they'd be wishing me well. At the Hotel Teresa, I was a big shot just as a desk clerk. It was right across from the Apollo Theater, and the lobby was filled with show-business people, hustlers, performers. Everybody came through there: Billie Holiday, Billy Eckstine, Louis Armstrong, Joe Louis. Ron Brown's father was a big poker player, and I was a gofer, and I made a lot of money. I probably made more money there in tips than I did in my law practice.

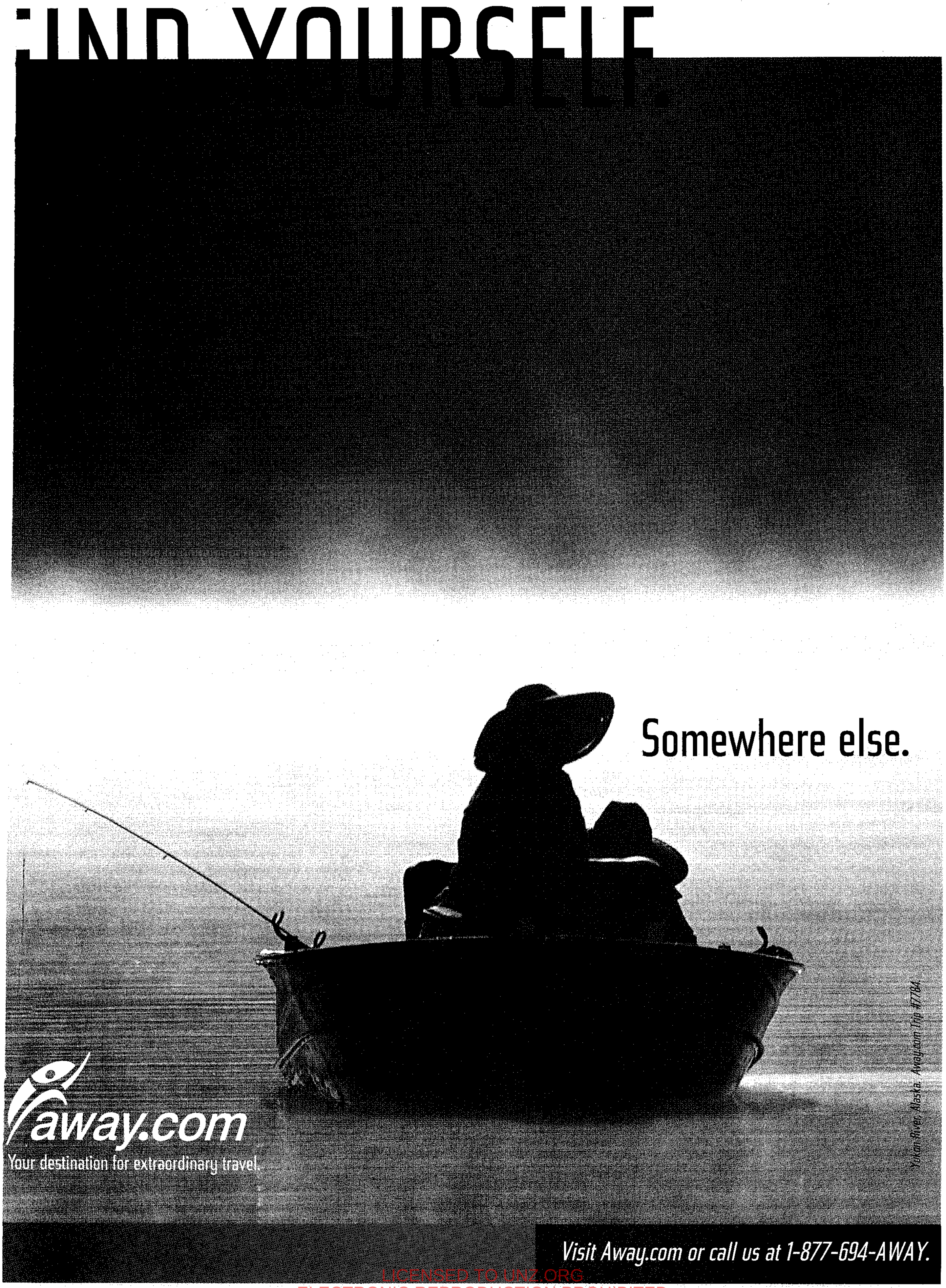
My first political meeting was on Lenox Avenue, at Noble's Undertaker Parlor. We got the crowd from 132nd and Lenox, the guys I was raised with. All the hoodlums I was raised with cleaned themselves up and came over in limos. I didn't recognize them.

James Atlas

In Room A of the **NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY**, there is no way to avoid finally writing your book.

There comes a moment at every book party when the memory of sitting at a long table in the main reading room of Widener Library 30 years ago comes back to me, a memory of silence, of pure concentration, of being happily alone. In the midst of feverishly trading information about who got what advance, I'll find myself overcome with a longing to experience again the sensation of poring over a dense page of print and taking notes, a pile of musty volumes at my elbow. Wasn't that what

Photograph by Brown Brothers.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drew me to the writing life?

I know a place, so hidden away that I'm nervous about even disclosing it, where the dream remains intact. It's the research room of the New York Society Library. At the desk, you're given a key and assigned Room A or B. You go up to the top floor in a creaking elevator, laptop in hand, and settle down at a desk that looks as if it could have occupied the newsroom of the old New York Herald Tribune in the 1920s. The only other furniture is an empty bookshelf. No phone, no view to speak of, just the brick wall of the apartment building next door. No distractions of any kind. Over a decade, I wrote a good part of my biography of Saul Bellow in that room. There was nothing else to do.

Often when I've been in Room A, Wendy Wasserstein has been typing away next door in Room B; she wrote *The Heidi Chronicles* in that room. Once, in a fit of boredom, I fetched some discarded pages out of the wastebasket; it turned out to be the manuscript of a play about Martians. The next time I ran into Wendy, I asked her what had happened to her extraterrestrial play. She stared at me: "How did you know about that?" I smiled.

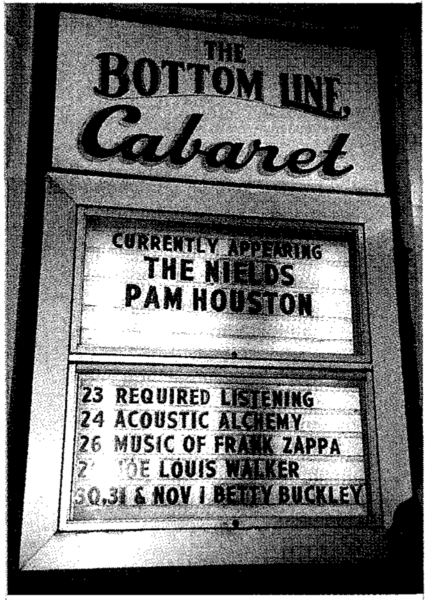
BOTTOM LINE FIGURES Above, David Johansen onstage; below, the night Houston finally saw her name in lights.

Pam Houston

Onstage at the **BOTTOM LINE** the writer lived out her rock-and-roll fantasy.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SYLVIA PLACHY

Dylan sat in with Muddy Waters at the Bottom Line. Paul Simon sat in with Tom Paxton. Springsteen rocked the club so hard he made the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* simultaneously. The Bottom Line's stage was Prince's New York debut. Mick Jagger sat in with Joe Satriani. Just last fall, Bonnie Raitt, Gladys Knight, and Judy Collins sat in with Beth Nielsen Chapman. Miles Davis, Dolly Parton, Joan Baez, Elvis Costello, and the Police are only a few of the innumerable artists that have taken the stage of Allan Pepper and Stanley Snadowsky's West Village club since they opened it in 1974, and in 1998, I added my name to that list.



I wasn't the first writer to perform at the Bottom Line. Richard Price read from his work as the opening act for Suzanne Vega, and Sarah Paretsky once read there. But for me, it was the best working night of my career, and among the most joyful six hours of my entire life.

First, I got to see my name in lights on the big white marquee. Then, I got to read from my fiction to two sold-out crowds, including some of my dearest friends. Best of all, I got to meet for the first time, set the stage for, and introduce my favorite alternative-rock band, the Nields.

I had first seen the Nields at a folk festival in Lyons, Colorado. *Gotta Get Over Greta* was their new album then, and I think they opened with "Best Black Dress." It took me about one whole verse to fall in love with them. Katryna's long-limbed energy, Nerissa's "I dare you" guitar and occasional belt of a solo, the three Daves on guitar,

Photograph: bottom, courtesy of Pam Houston.

ss, and drums. I knew right away at Nerissa was the writer. She had at stretched look around her eyes. nd Katryna followed the emotional ller coaster of her sister's pen as if ey were, well, sisters.

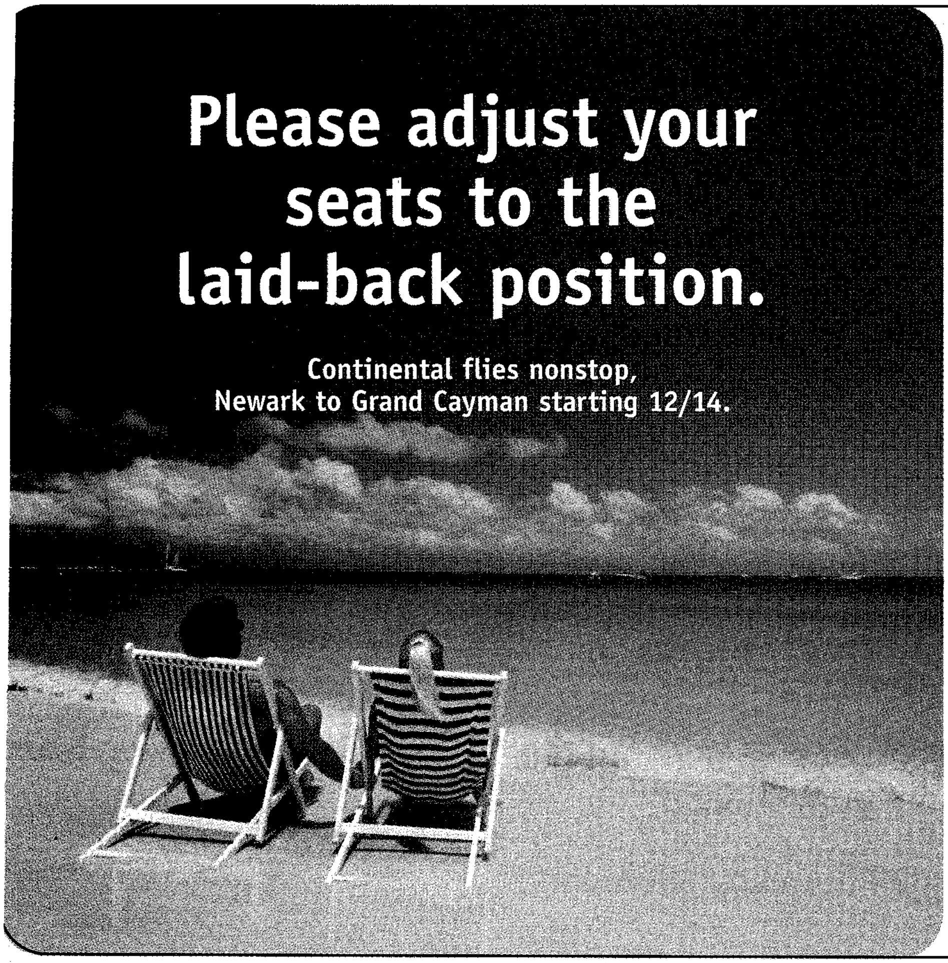
I went home and wrote them a fan tter, and they were in Birmingham, labama, by the time it caught up. heir van was broken down for the undredth time that summer and they ere contemplating disbanding, once nd for all. It's better if they tell the ext part of the story, but suffice it to y that my letter cheered them up. nough to get the van xed one more time, and nough for David (Neris- a's husband) to write me ack and tell me that they ad read my first book, *Cowboys Are y Weakness,* and had written a song 'Art of the Gun") that was influenced y one of my stories.

My second book was scheduled to ome out the same month as their next lbum. My publicist called their publi- ist, and the next thing you know, Allan Pepper had said we could perform together at the Bottom Line.

"Every writer secretly wants to be a **rock star.**"

They say every writer secretly wants to be a rock star, and every rock star secretly wants to be a writer. Speaking for myself, there wasn't a moment of my night in that hallowed hall that wasn't star perfection. There was the ugly little green room with its platters of Butterfingers and Oreos, its walls covered with head shots and graffiti gone by. There was David Nield's smile when I walked in the door, and the gruff stage manager who kept telling all of us to please watch our time. During the sound check I could hear the echo of Arlo Guthrie and Townes Van Zandt bouncing from wall to wall. I wanted to take off my shoes and walk the stage barefoot to soak up all that song wisdom in the floorboards. When I read my story, the crowd laughed and gasped in all the right places. When the Nields came out and started singing, none of us could stay in our chairs. The Nields invited me onstage for a solo "on book" during their encore. And at the end of the night, when Allan Pepper stuffed a roll of twenties into my hand—my "cut of the door"—I thought, *I will never spend these bills.*

A couple of years have passed since that night. The Nields and I perform together in cities other than New York at least once a year. We always have fun onstage together, and the crowds have a good time. But there will never be another night like that first one, when I walked through the West Village thinking about Miles Davis and Bruce Springsteen, on my way to meet my new friends, on my way to being a momentary rock star, on my way to adding my name to the substantial list of artists whose dream came true at the Bottom Line.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James J. Cramer

"Compaq was a buy, and I was in **love.**"

In the middle of **THIRD AVENUE**, at 36th Street, a Wall Street trader bids on the biggest merger of his career.

Cross Third Avenue at 36th Street going west. You see that spot, about two thirds of the way across? That's where I knew I had met my match, where I knew I had found a woman who could speak my language, who would go where no woman on earth had ever ventured with me before. That's where I asked Karen Backfisch, on our very first date, what she thought of Compaq. We had just left our office, and not only did she not laugh at me, but by the time we reached the pavement on the west side of Third, I knew two things: Compaq was a buy, and I was in love.

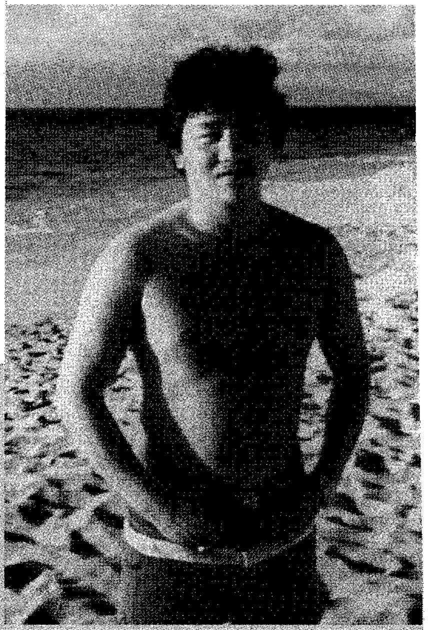
Office romances don't get nearly the respect they deserve. Work is the place where you meet people who have something in common with you. On some nondescript floor in a high-rise on Third Avenue, I met my wife-to-be; she sat on the trading desk of Steinhardt Partners, while I had just emigrated from Goldman Sachs.

I asked her for that date on the sly: I gave her a piece of research—I still have it—that showed a graph of Harcourt Brace's stock, which had been straight up. I crossed out the lower axis and wrote, "My interest in meeting you after the close for a drink." Next thing you know, we were having margaritas across the street at El Rio Grande.

The fact that she didn't sneer at someone who's idea of cocktail talk was Compaq's basics was terrific; and the fact that her answer made me money, even better; and the fact that she joined me, not long after, as a trader for the new company we started was the best. A year and a half later, we were married at the Boathouse in Central Park.

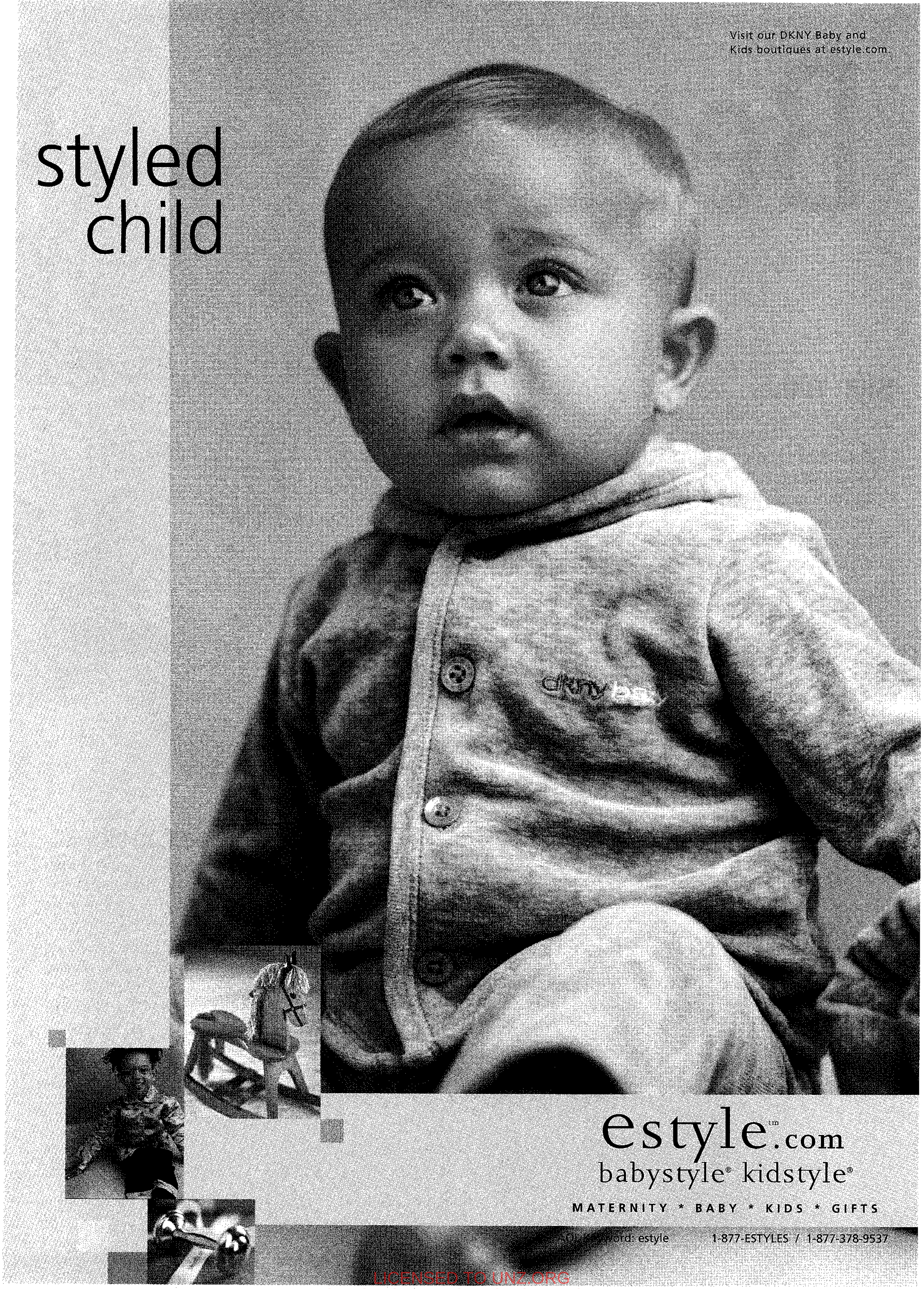
Rocky Aoki

"In the summer of 1962, I saw an ad in the New York *Times* that said, "Ice cream truck for lease, $25 a day." So I sell ice cream with a Mr. Frostee truck for three months. I start selling ice cream in midtown, but nobody buys. I don't know what to do. One day, I make a mistake and end up in Harlem. Harlem's safe today, but back then, no one thought it was, and nobody was selling ice cream up there. But I was a wrestling champion, so I wasn't afraid of anything. It was a hot summer and people went crazy for my ice cream. • I'd drive down 125th, 126th, and 127th Street, and sell to kids on the corners. They always called me Chinaman. But I knew a gimmick was important. I had Japanese music broadcasting out of my truck, and put a tiny Japanese umbrella in every cone. • I sold ice cream seven days a week, sixteen or seventeen hours a day. That summer, I made $10,000. I used it to open my first Benihana restaurant. That truck made me what I am today."



KEEPING COOL Aoki on Long Island, 1962.

Photograph: courtesy Rocky Aoki.



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Best Bet

RIMA SUQI

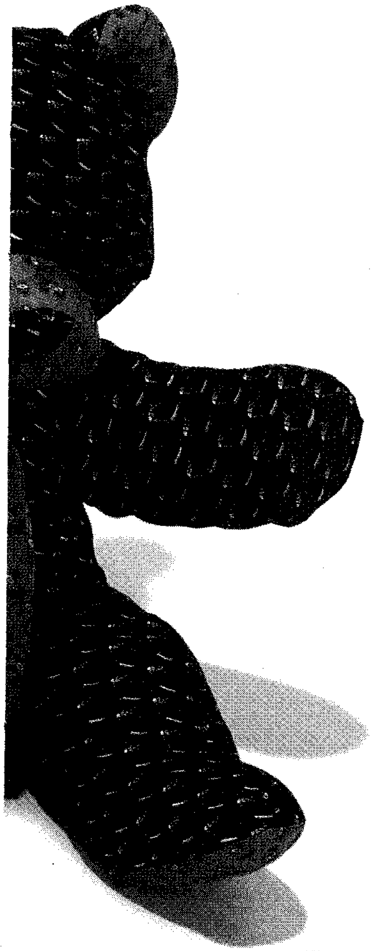
Silk Teddy Leftovers usually aren't the most savory scraps, unless they're pure silk and used to make downright stylish teddy bears, like these by Salvatore Ferragamo. Fashioned from remnants of the company's discontinued scarves and ties, they are luxuriously soft and available in girl and boy versions ($205).

▶ **SALVATORE FERRAGAMO**
661 Fifth Avenue/212-759-3822

Croc Around the Clock If your crocodile clutch just isn't enough of a good thing, take the trend home. Literally. Penthouse A has created this crocodile sofa table, sized for even the smallest of spaces. It's *faux,* of course, but truly fabulous in a classic shade of red that its designer, Charles McNutt, claims is a "color that people can incorporate into any interior, since it's not as big a commitment as orange or pink." The table also comes in chocolate brown and camel ($1,200).

▶ **ROOM**
182 Duane Street/212-226-1045

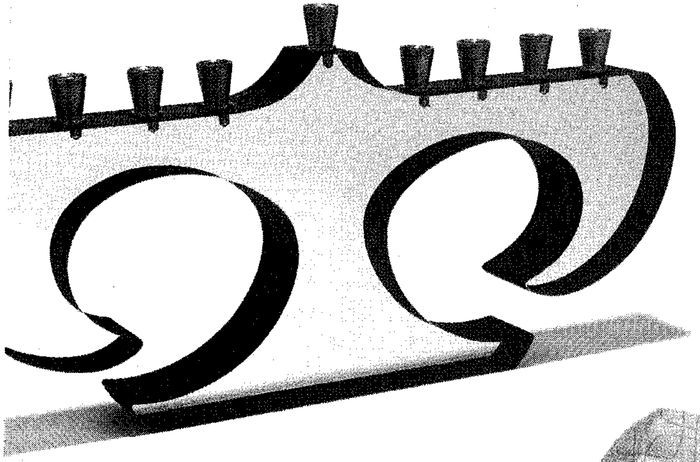
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAMES WORRELL



Road Movies

Taking a holiday road trip with the kids? Dreading the drive? Video in a Bag is a transportable video system from Audiovox with a four-inch screen that hangs between the driver's and the front passenger's seats. It's equipped with headphone jacks, so kids can be diverted for hours while the grown-ups argue over the best route ($399).

▶ **CIRCUIT CITY**
52 East 14th Street/212-387-0730



Festival of Lights

Hanukkah may be thousands of years old, but the Marla menorah, by Cec LePage, would look right at home alongside your collection of Cappellini furniture. LePage, who has designed candlesticks for the Museum of Modern Art and a perfume bottle for Karl Lagerfeld, incorporated Judaica into her home-furnishings line after repeated requests. The Marla is one of four menorahs LePage has designed; each is carved from Lucite, painted by hand, and available in dozens of colors ($218).

▶ **LEPAGE NEW YORK**
72 Thompson Street/212-966-2646

Air Cooled

Inspired by the retro-chic Pan Am logo, Dwell has launched a new line of bedding for those who lose sleep over flowery designs. Queen sets of 215-thread-count, Egyptian-combed-cotton sheets are taupe, light blue, and white-on-white and come in two geometric patterns that can be mixed and matched. Just close your eyes and imagine you're boarding the Clipper to dreamland ($355 for set).

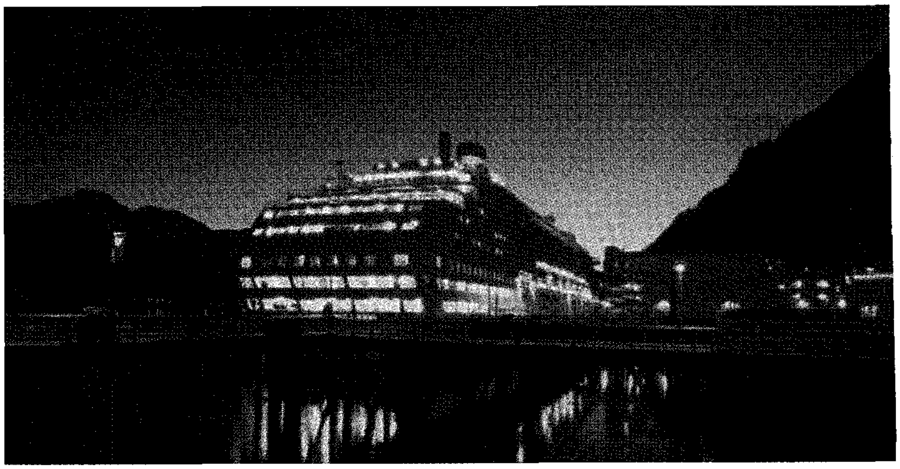
▶ **AD HOC**
136 Wooster Street/212-982-7703

ALLEN SALKIN

Escape Artists

Planning a winter holiday? Whether trekking the Tibetan Himalayas or trolling the Clignancourt flea market, be sure to get onboard with the right travel agent

WITH MORE PEOPLE booking their own trips on the Web and airlines reducing fees paid to booking agents, travel professionals have been forced to specialize, hoping to become known for their expertise in particular niches. So that, whether your idea of a relaxing vacation means lacing up hiking boots and packing a snakebite kit or wearing dancing shoes and downing snakebite shooters, it's worth finding one that shares your obsessions.



ADVENTURE

Most "hard adventure" travel agents and tour companies are based in California and Washington state. For treks in Kilimanjaro, hikes through Nepal, or safaris in Kenya, the best in the business is **Mountain Travel-Sobek** in El Cerrito, California (800-227-2384; www.mtsobek.com).

Madeleine Newbauer, at **Tzell Travel Specialists** (119 West 40th Street; 212-944-2121; www.tzell.com), focuses on "soft adventure" for those in the over-50 set who want to trek through exotic settings by day and pitch camp at a nicely appointed hotel at night. She recently booked one customer on a 22-day Silk Route tour in Central Asia, from Tashkent, Uzbekistan, to Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan.

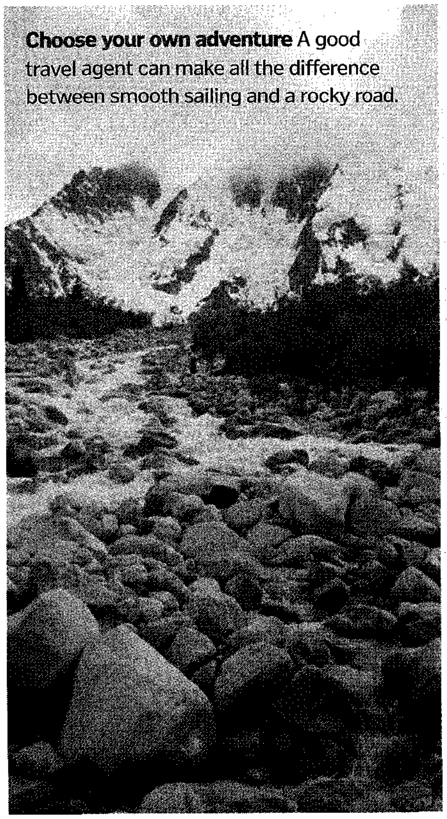
PACKAGE

If your ideal vacation requires being insulated from potential hassles and meeting lots of other people like yourself, or if you're simply too stressed at work to deal with planning a trip, you need an all-inclusive package deal. **Liberty Travel** (877-999-2089; www.libertytravel.com), the all-inclusive clearinghouse, can see you off for seven nights at the Club Med in Turkoise, Turks, or Caicos—airfare, room, and limbo contest included—for $999, or six days at Whistler Mountain in British Columbia, lift tickets included, for $799.

Contiki Holidays (714-935-0808; www.contiki.com) organizes vacations for the 18-to-35 age bracket. Call them directly in Anaheim, or book their popular trips through any number of Big Apple agencies (Council Travel included). A fourteen-day, Greek-island-hopping tour that includes Santorini, Paros, and Mykonos, and includes breakfasts, dinners, hotels, buses, ferries, a tour guide, a welcome drink, and a backpack, costs $975, not including airfare from New York.

CRUISE

I don't remember *The Love Boat*'s Captain Stubing and Isaac ever disembarking in Puerto Caldera, Costa Rica, or Valparaiso, Chile, but you can by calling Jacquelyn Wolfer at **International Tours and Cruises** (184 Fifth Avenue, near 23rd Street; 212-242-2511). The agency won the Cruise Lines International Association Travel Agency of the Year award in both 1996 and 1998, and handles such a huge volume of trips that it is able to deliver exclusive special offers and upgrades.



Choose your own adventure A good travel agent can make all the difference between smooth sailing and a rocky road.

Photographs: top, David W. Hamilton/Image Bank; bottom, William Russell Ackerman.

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BUDGET

Edward Hasbrouck at San Francisco-based **High Adventure Travel** (800-350-0612; www.airtreks.com) scores rock-bottom, round-the-world airfares by finding out which airlines are offering the lowest prices on any given route and employing a worldwide network of brokers to buy tickets in the country where they're cheapest. (The lowest prices on New York–London nonstops are usually offered on China Airways and Air India.) And for excellent eleventh-hour deals, I have bought many a ticket over the years from **Travelite Express** (47 West 34th Street; 212-594-8844). There's no Website and the service is brusque, but with fares like New York–Honolulu round-trip for $580, so what?

The nation's leader in the "student travel" niche—selling internationally recognized student I.D.'s, hostel passes, discounted fares, and loosely packaged tours on which college-age travelers can mingle with their own—is **Council Travel** (205 East 42nd Street; 212-822-2700, www.counciltravel.com).

LUXURY

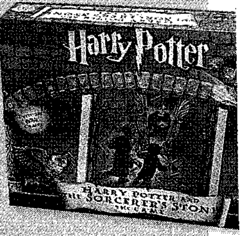
Special orders don't faze the folks at **Linden Travel** (41 East 57th Street; 212-421-3320, www.lindentravel.com). When a client who booked a penthouse suite on an Alaska-bound cruise decided, upon embarking, that she "could care less about fucking seals" and demanded to watch her *Winds of War* video collection instead, Linden overnighted a VCR to Vancouver, where an agent cleared the machine through Customs and delivered it to the ship before departure. Other requests, like last-minute reservations at of-the-moment restaurants like Antico Arco in Rome, are just as readily dispatched since the agency is on a first-name basis with concierges and maître d's worldwide.

Another luxury specialist, Danielle Gigante at the Travel Lady division of **Rich Worldwide Travel** (914-381-2500; www.richtravel.com), recently arranged an eighteen-day, whirlwind tour of China. With a guide waiting in every airport, a car and driver each day, the best hotel in each city, and tickets for a tribal-dance performance in the Tibetan-plateau gateway city of Kunming and for the famed Shanghai Children Acrobats troupe in Shanghai, the well-to-do explorers were able to tour the world's largest communist country in total bourgeois comfort. ■

Welcome to Pottersville

The first four books have been read and reread, J. K. Rowling says she's taking her time with No. 5, and the movie hasn't been filmed yet, but don't worry—an avalanche of Potter paraphernalia, from board games to Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans, has arrived in time for the holidays. Of course, without having read the Potter books as many times as our kids have, how are we to judge which of these are worth the often hefty price tag? We assembled a panel of Potter cognoscenti—ages 8, 8, 11, and 12—to render their assessments. Ratings are on a scale of 0 to 5 broomsticks.

Harry Potter Uno ($12.50). Basically the same as regular Uno, except that the cards have Harry Potter characters, creatures, and artifacts on them, and it comes in a treasure chest. The panel thought that the game's goal of 500 points was too high, and some felt it was more fun without the points. Rating: 3 brooms.

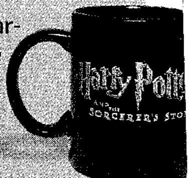


Harry Potter and the Sorceror's Stone: The Game ($26). The box includes six-plus games (the plus being a boardless memory game the panelists rated "very cool"). The board games range in complexity from roll-the-dice-and-move-your-piece to a chess set with Harry Potter characters for the pieces. The major complaint was that instructions, said 8-year-old Ben, were "hard to understand." "Some of the games were so stupid, they tried to make the directions confusing to cover it up," added 11-year-old Emily. Overall rating: 2 brooms.

Harry Potter: Mystery at Hogwarts Game ($20). The basic concept is "too much like Clue," but its execution is "true to the book," mused 8-year-old Nick. "It's a really good game," agreed 12-year-old Rebecca. Rating: 4 brooms.

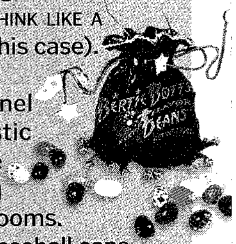
Harry Potter
Trivia Game

Harry Potter Trivia Game ($24). A runaway hit: "The best of the Harry Potter board games," proclaimed Rebecca. The testers liked the flexibility of the concept, too. "You can quiz yourself with the trivia cards and not bother with the actual game," Emily pointed out. Rating: 5 brooms.



Harry Potter mug and Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans ($12). Along with cherry, orange sherbet, and grape jelly are more exotic beans—blueberry, raspberry, buttered popcorn, kiwi—but no earwax or liver, as in the books. (Jelly Belly, the bean makers, promise a $4.99 mugless red pouch that will include sardine, black pepper, and grass, in time for the holidays.) Rating: 2 brooms.

Harry Potter calendars ($12.99 each). Both were rated "very cool" by the panel, which recognized the illustrations on the wall version as School of Harry Potter covers. "It's exciting to see what your birthday says," said Nick of the desk model (THINK LIKE A WIZARD—WHERE WOULD YOU GO IF YOU HAD AN INVISIBILITY CLOAK? in his case). Rating: 5 brooms each.



Harry Potter: The Collector Stones (3 for $5). The panel unanimously declared this "the biggest ripoff." The plastic container conceals three plastic stones, so you can't see what you're getting, forcing the collector to keep buying duplicates in hopes of getting a complete set. Rating: 0 brooms.

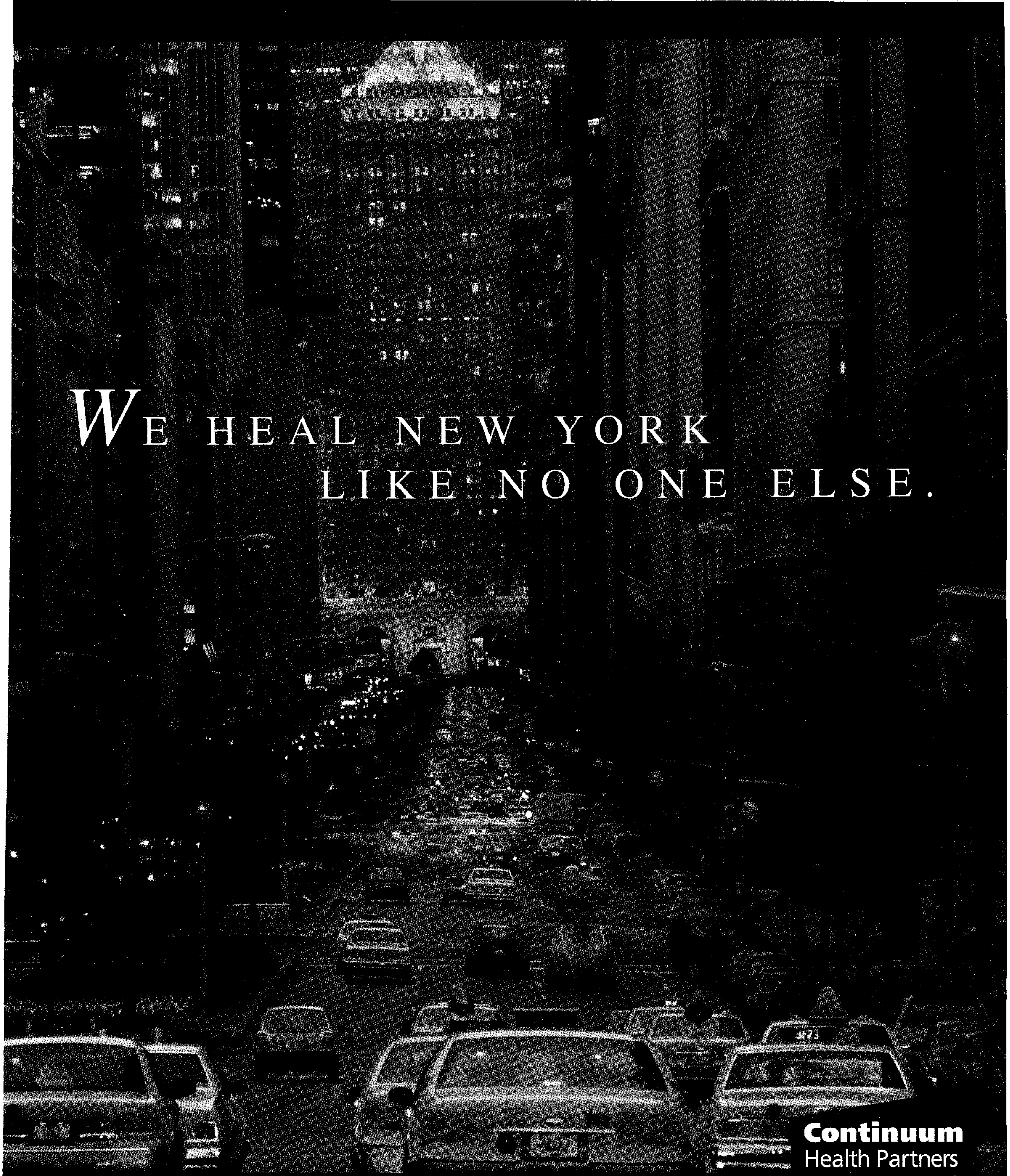
Harry Potter clothing. The merchandise ranges from $16 baseball caps to $12 T-shirts to $38 sweatshirts, all emblazoned with the appropriate catchwords (Quidditch, Gryffindor, Harry Potter, a golden "H" crest for Hogwarts, and so on). The quality is good, but obviously you're paying a premium for the logos. Rating: 4 brooms.

JEREMY GERARD

Harry Potter

All prices are from Warner Studio Store; select games and other Harry Potter merchandise are available at all major toy stores.

Photographs by Joe Scafuro.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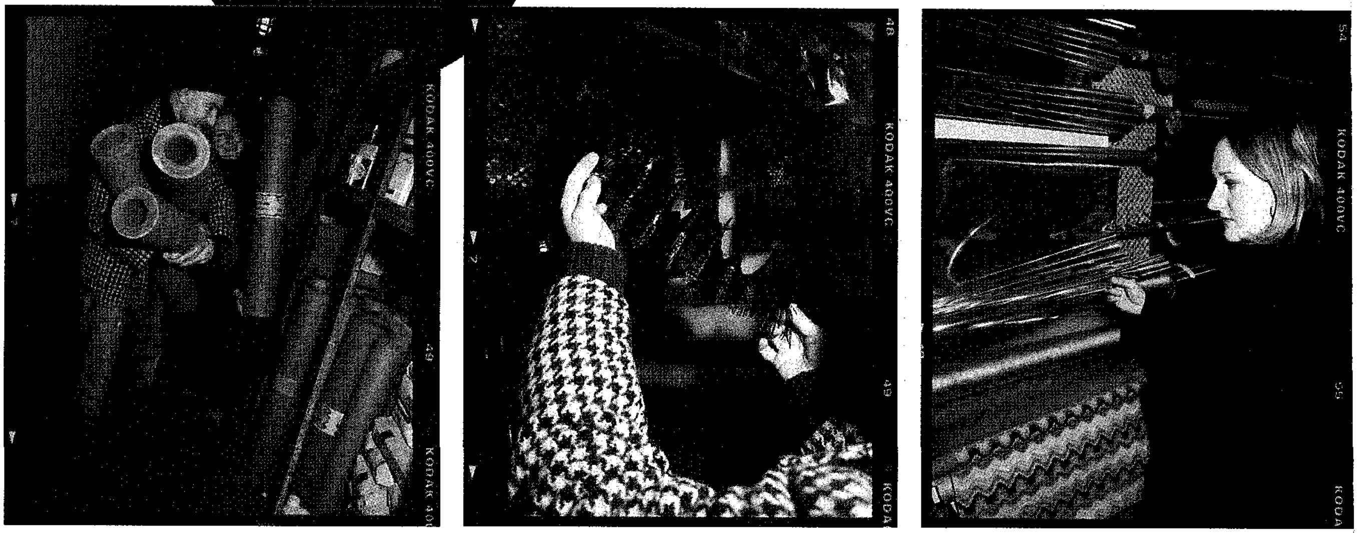

Donna's (and Ralph's and Barneys') helpers: Shari and Joe scour Janovic and Industrial Plastics for holiday trimmings.

Merry Makers

Wrap artists: Shari Anlauf and Joe Tate spend a bundle decorating store windows for the holidays. But you can use their secrets without busting your gift-buying budget.

IF YOUR HOLIDAY DECORATING typically begins on Christmas Eve with a trip to Duane Reade, consider this: Production designers Shari Anlauf and Joe Tate start theirs in August, when they begin sourcing materials to design holiday windows for some of the city's best stores. This season, they did the slick, neon-lit ones at DKNY; in the past, they've worked with Barneys, Bergdorf's, Fendi, and FAO Schwarz. Last Christmas, Polo Ralph Lauren windows cost tens of thousands in trimmings alone—pricey silk flowers from **Dulken & Derrick**, antique ribbons from **Hyman Hendler**, and odds and ends from insider-y antiques shops like **Paula Rubenstein**. But more often than not, Shari and Joe hunt in professional supply shops. These aren't particularly cheery themselves, but—as we discovered tagging along on a shopping expedition last week—they have everything you need to get into the spirit on a shoestring.

Spools of ribbon hang from floor to ceiling at **Daytona Trimmings**, a dusty garment-district shop that supplies designers with every imaginable kind of adornments. Most ribbons here are under 50 cents a yard, and even the more intricate ones—embroidered, sequined, beaded, or metallic—rarely cost more than $3 or $4. As Joe says, the place "blows Kate's Paperie out of the water." He and Shari have an enviable knack for making rather silly-looking stuff look very stylish and modern (for DKNY, they made wigs out of $7-a-yard extra-wide pink raffia-fringed plastic ribbon). But beginners are advised to experiment with disco-y sequined elastic styles (50 cents a yard), folksy embroidered cottons (mostly $3 a yard),or skinny, old-fashioned zigzag ribbons in dozens of saturated pastel colors (25 cents a yard). Wider ribbons make chic, easy garlands for trees and are snazzy accents on other decorations. "I'm putting olive boughs from the flower district over my doorways," Shari says as she unrolls a funky, Moroccan-patterned spool ($3 a yard). "This would be great for tying them."

With all those ribbons, you don't need fancy wrapping paper. In fact, these two prefer makeshift versions—artists' parchments, French marbled papers, and handmade Japanese rice paper from **Pearl Paint** ($2 to $5 a sheet—significantly less than this stuff costs when packaged as wrapping paper). Minimalists: Retire that tired brown craft paper in your closet. Shari has a better idea: Red Rosin, the sturdy reddish paper used by movers and painters to protect floors, has the same effect and is far more original ($12 for a 500-square-foot roll at **Janovic** stores). Use it alone or tie it with pretty ribbons "for a leather-and-lace kind of look." Finally, pick up a load of bulk-priced tissue paper in white or beige from **Wolf Paper & Twine** ($26 for two reams—that's 960 sheets), where these two buy chipboard to make papier-mâché sculptures (like the faux cakes and hams Joe once whipped up for Barneys). And while you're at it, Shari points out, you might as well pick up a few boxes to stow your creations in at the end of the season.

For flashier materials—say a disco-

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photographs by Brooke Williams.

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chic gold foil or, for that matter, a disco ball—Shari and Joe swear by **Industrial Plastics**, a dark, grungy Canal Street source of gargoyles, garden sculptures, plastic desk accessories, and loads of metallic papers and plastic sheeting. Kodak Halosheen, a delicate, iridescent mylar, is Shari's favorite. "So spacey and icy—for that really special present," she marvels ($7.95 a yard). Joe prefers a kitschy pink-and-yellow-painted version—and *adores* deliciously garish perforated fuchsia foil streamers: "Bows! ribbons! garlands!" The possibilities are endless ($3.50 a yard). Festive "linens" are a cinch with a few yards of the shop's translucent plastic sheeting. Shari inspects a rippled-looking gold roll. "Use those square-edged shears to cut it," she suggests, for glam mats or runners ($18 a yard). "Or a tree skirt," Joe pipes in, fashioning a red version into a cone. With these two, nothing is useless. Tinted clear-plastic bowls? Joe holds two together, "cheap instant packaging," he insists.

Dulken & Derrick, 12 W. 21st St. (212-929-3614); Hyman Hendler & Sons, 67 W. 38th St. (212-840-8393); Paula Rubenstein Antiques, 65 Prince St. (212-966-8954); Daytona Trimmings, 251 W. 39th St. (212-354-1713); Pearl Paint, 308 Canal St. (212-431-7932) and 207 E. 23rd St. (212-592-2179); Wolf Paper & Twine, 680 Sixth Ave., near 21st St. (212-675-4870); Industrial Plastic Supply, 309 Canal St. (212-226-2010).

Picks of the Week

Vera Wang evening wear is up to 75 percent off. Short dresses are from $200; beaded gowns are about $800. *980 Madison Ave., near 77th St., third floor (212-879-1700); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Wed. 10-5; 12/12-12/13.*

Oscar de la Renta's glamorous leftover fall clothes—everything from suits and sweaters to ball gowns—are 75 percent off, from $200 to $1,500. *Etoile Café, 109 E. 56th St. (212-753-7690); M.C., V.; Wed. 9-7, Thurs. till 3; 12/13-12/14.*

Stuart Weitzman's fall shoes and boots are at least 30 percent off (buy more, save more). Original prices are $170 to $350. *625 Madison Ave., near 59th St. (212-750-2555); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10-6:30, Sat. till 6, Sun. noon-5; 12/8 until supplies last.*

Trussardi's luxe Italian leather—bags, clothes, shearling coats, and more—is 50 to 70 percent off, from $50. *20 W. 57th St., 6th floor (212-246-9860); A.E., M.C., V.; Thurs.-Fri. 9-6; 12/14-12/15.*

Georgia Hughes is taking half off he glamorous wool hats, many with fu trim (at stores like Bendel's). Prices ar $165 to $350. *45 E. 89th St. (212-996 5183); checks accepted; Mon.-Sun noon-6; 12/11-12/17.*

Capezio is taking 15 to 25 percent of everything during its one-day sale Stock up on leotards, dance shoes, an accessories. *1650 Broadway, at 51st St. second floor (212-245-2130), and 177 Broadway, at 57th St., second floo (212-586-5140); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed 9-9; 12/13.*

Bajra shawls and pashmina accessorie and **Catherine**'s colorful, ultra-feminin dresses and knits are all 60 to 80 percent off, from $40 to $500. *24 W. 40th St., first floor (212-877-579-0222); A.E. M.C., V.; Tues.-Fri. 8-7, Thurs. till 8 Sat. 10-4; 12/12-12/16.*

Noir supertrendy jewelry, bags, belts and hair things are 30 to 50 percent off from $25 for hoop earrings to $180 fo a low-slung belt with a crystal sta buckle. *208 W. 29th St., second floo (212-244-4846); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.-Thurs. 11-6, Fri. till 5; 12/13-12/15.*

Jane Bohan is taking at least half off loads of her pretty, fashion-y jewels, including faceted peridot bead necklaces (from $475), pearl bracelets (from $265), and gold and semiprecious stone stud earrings (from $115). *236 W. 30th St., seventh floor (212-594-7103); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.-Fri. 11-6; 12/13-12/15.*

Kokin's many, many kinds of hats—crushable leather, cashmere knit, structured mink-trimmed, and more (sold at stores like Barneys and Bendels)—are at least 70 percent off, $15-$180 (usually $75-$850). You'll also find wraps and handbags. *20 W. 36th St., tenth floor (212-643-8225); cash only; Wed.-Fri. 9-5:30; 12/13-12/15.*

Annabel Ingall's of-the-moment fur accessories and hand-knit wool ones (at Saks), are 25 to 60 percent off. *80 W. 40th St., seventh floor (212-719-4676); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 9-6; 12/11-12/15.*

Gabriele Sanders top-end pashmina—shawls, pj's, pillows, and baby blankets—in a huge range of colors (not just pastels) is half off, from $50 for a shawl to $500 for a blanket. *33 Bleecker St., second floor (212-260-5600); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Thurs. 10-7; 12/18-12/21.* ■

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Beauty

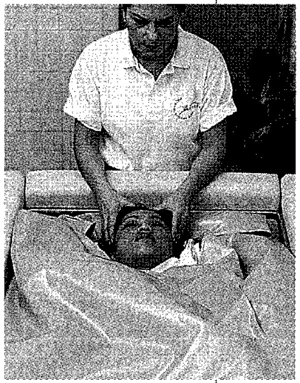
BETH LANDMAN KEIL

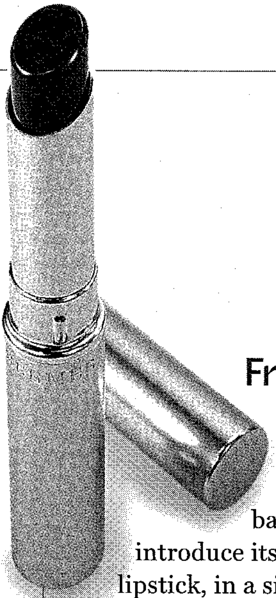
Italian Vogue

In a way, it's no surprise that the makeup at the Madina Milano store, which opened on Spring Street over Thanksgiving weekend, is a remarkable mix of high-tech and high style. Madina Ferrari was formerly creative director for La Scala, while her husband owns Intercos—one of the largest cosmetics manufacturers in the world—so she has what amounts to a giant workshop. Holiday lip glosses contain bits of glitter and images of Christmas trees and Santas; vivid eye shadows are mixed into mosaic patterns and sprayed with gold dust. The store has about 1,500 items (no fragrance or skin-care yet), and it promises to debut at least one new product a month. (151 Spring Street; 646-613-0838.)

Smooth Sailing

Remember those eighties-era sensory-deprivation tanks, where floating in a water-filled egg-shaped capsule was supposed to relieve stress and return you to the peace of the womb? Unfortunately, the struggle to keep your neck afloat and the claustrophobia caused by the coffin-like capsule often produced more anxiety than it alleviated. But for those who still yearn for the tank, there's hope. The Sports Club/LA's new spa has devised an updated version, which, it claims, not only is relaxing but also helps reduce headaches and cramps. You get a weightless sensation by lying on a plastic cushion that fills up with hot water, engulfing you like a zero-gravity Snuggli. And all this without ever having to get wet. (330 East 61st Street; 212-355-5100. $100 including massage.)





French Kiss

Hermès, maker of those coveted $5,000 Kelly bags, is about to introduce its first cosmetic: lipstick, in a single shade of red. The ruby hue, called Rouge Hermès, matches the color that has been used to dye the company's leather since the thirties. Why lipstick? The company is launching a new scent by the same name next month, and, explains a spokeswoman, "it's our most sophisticated fragrance—the one you would wear with a sexy evening dress and the deep-red lipstick." But, she adds, don't look for other makeup to follow. ($25; available in January at Hermès boutiques, Bergdorf Goodman, and Sephora stores.)

Curl On Up

If you don't have curly—*really* curly—hair, then you can't imagine what those of us who do are up against: an ongoing uphill battle fought with blow-dryers, pomades, and hot irons. But the three-step Radical Anticurl treatment at Red Salon is a new addition to the arsenal. Whereas traditional chemical relaxers were essentially reverse perms designed to burn the curl out, Red Salon's treatment "just softens the curl pattern, it doesn't straighten the hair," says owner Brad Langtry. His remedy is gentle enough for color-treated locks, and won't fry your 'do like the old relaxers. In other words, you look like yourself—just better. ($125–$195, depending on hair length and thickness; 323 West 11th Street; 212-924-1444.)

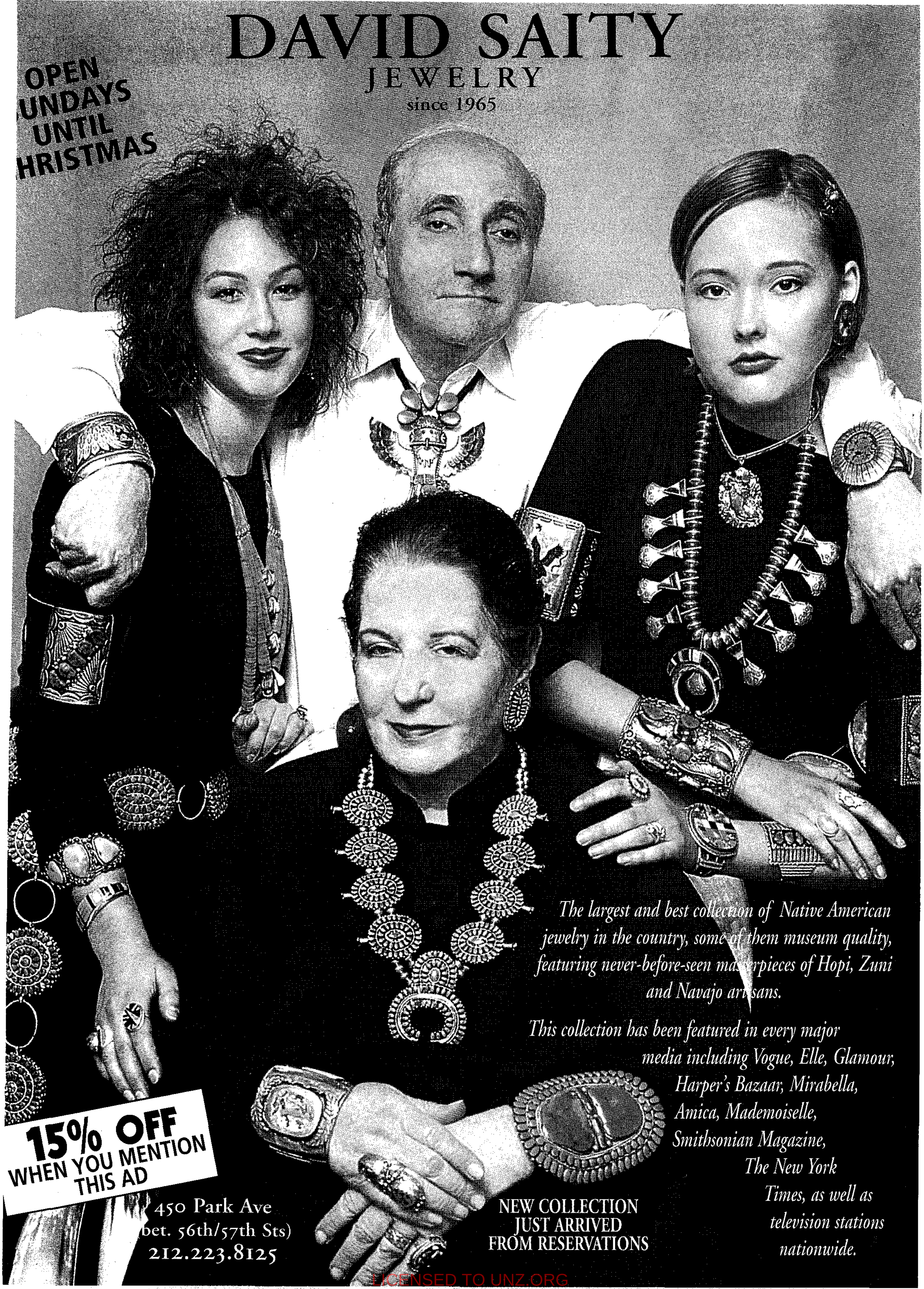
CHANEL
CHANEL

Pick of the Month

Chanel's Aqualumieres Water Palette

"Makeup artist" takes on a whole new meaning with this watercolor-kit-like compact. The eight shades work equally well on lips, eyes, or cheeks, and can be applied dry, or wet for more intense color. The compact, hitting stores January 1, comes with two brushes and a tiny reservoir for water. ($60; available at Chanel Boutiques, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Barneys New York.)

Photographs: clockwise from bottom, Joe Scafuro (3); Carina Salvi.



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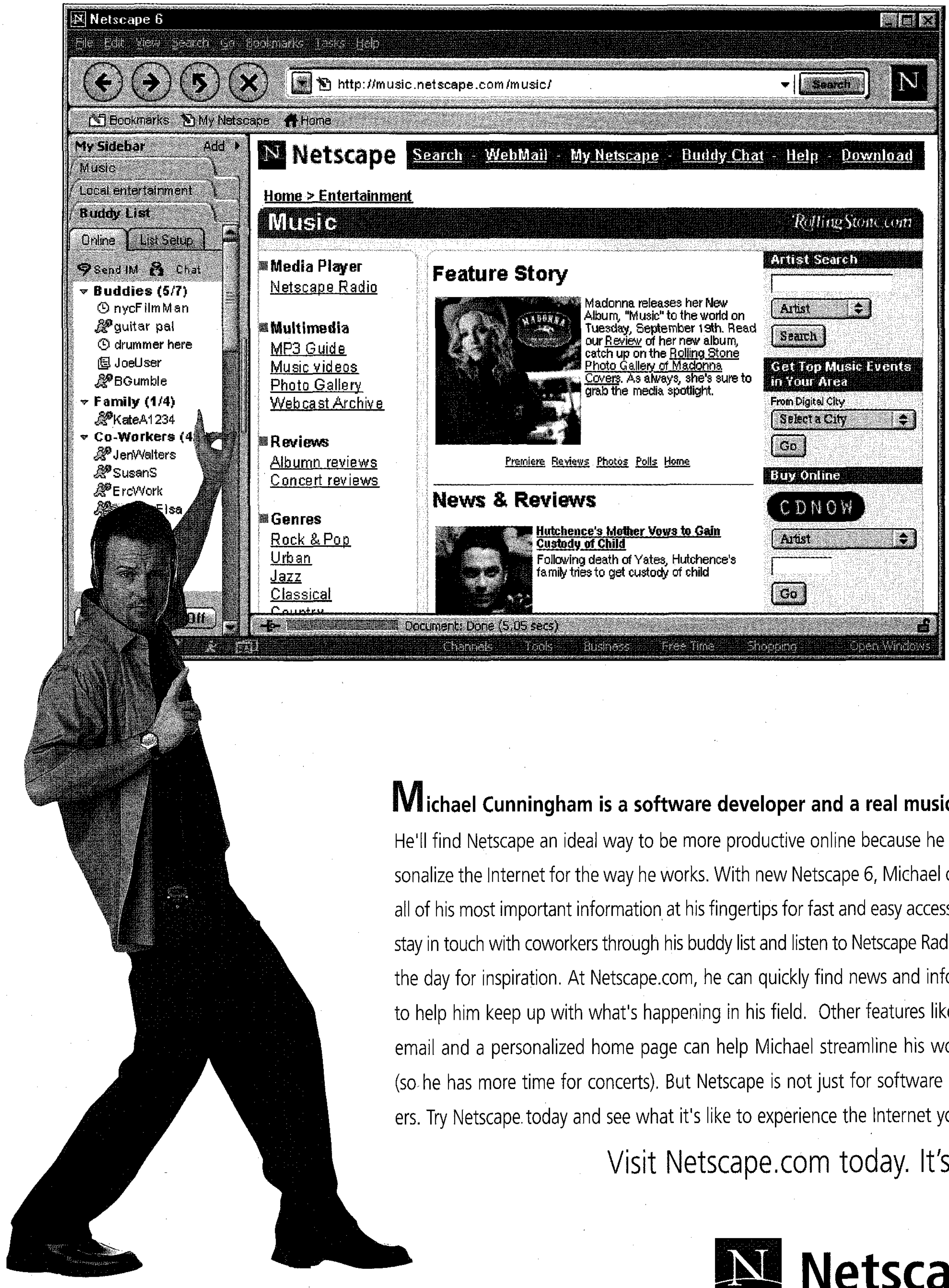
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Madonna releases her New Album, "Music" to the world on Tuesday, September 19th. Read our Review of her new album, catch up on the Rolling Stone Photo Gallery of Madonna Covers. As always, she's sure to grab the media spotlight.

Hutchence's Mother Vows to Gain Custody of Child

Following death of Yates, Hutchence's family tries to get custody of child

Michael Cunningham is a software developer and a real music lover. He'll find Netscape an ideal way to be more productive online because he can personalize the Internet for the way he works. With new Netscape 6, Michael can keep all of his most important information at his fingertips for fast and easy access. He can stay in touch with coworkers through his buddy list and listen to Netscape Radio during the day for inspiration. At Netscape.com, he can quickly find news and information to help him keep up with what's happening in his field. Other features like search, email and a personalized home page can help Michael streamline his work tasks (so he has more time for concerts). But Netscape is not just for software developers. Try Netscape today and see what it's like to experience the Internet your way.

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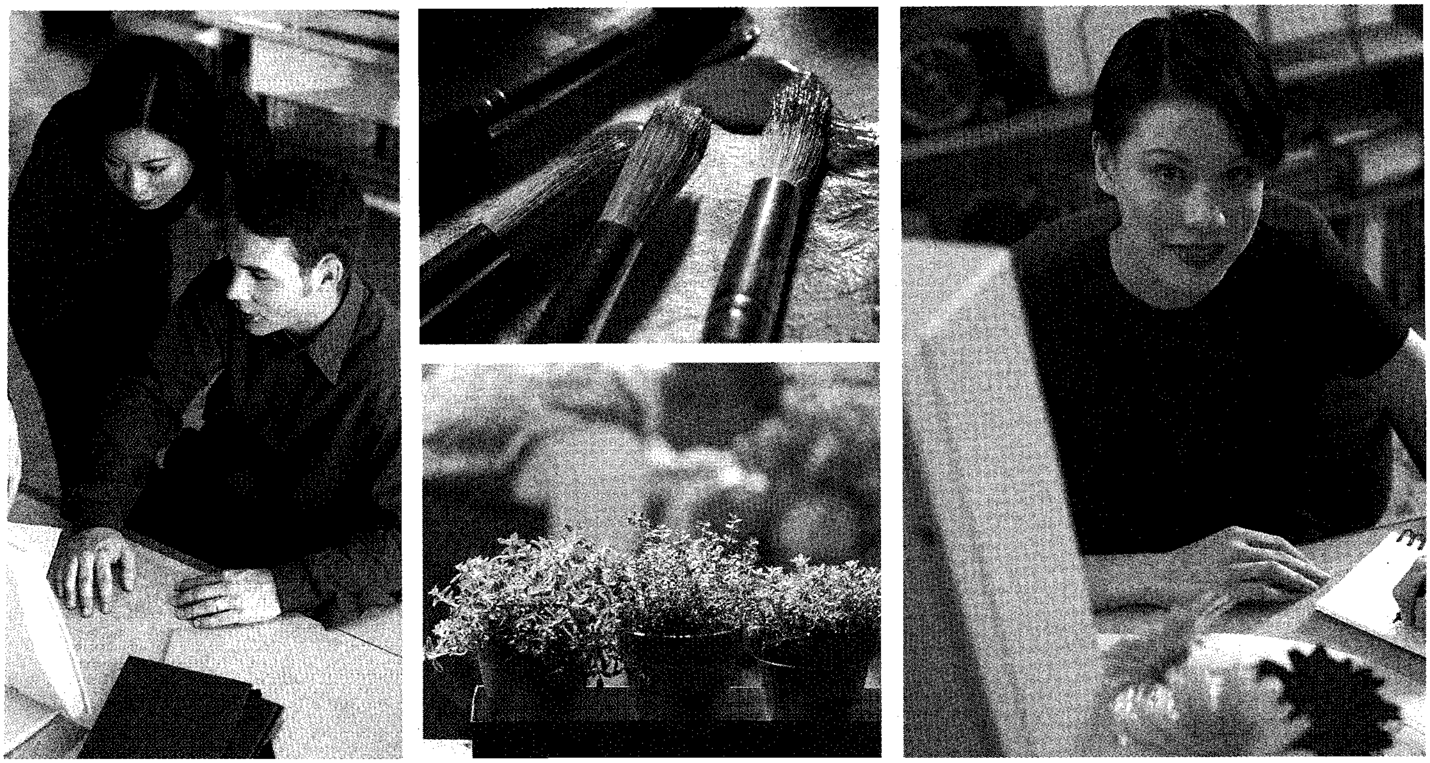


▪ **spring**education

Not so long ago, education was something you finished before you started your career. Now, education is something you pursue throughout your career–or several careers. Lifelong learning is about pursuing your professional and personal interests, according to your own timetable. Full-time, part-time, days, evenings, weekends. You don't even have to go to school to go to school anymore–just drop in 24/7 on the Internet. We've surveyed the best and brightest of the educational opportunities coming up this spring, and offer the following ways to move up the corporate ladder, satisfy a longstanding creative impulse, or add a little fun to your life.

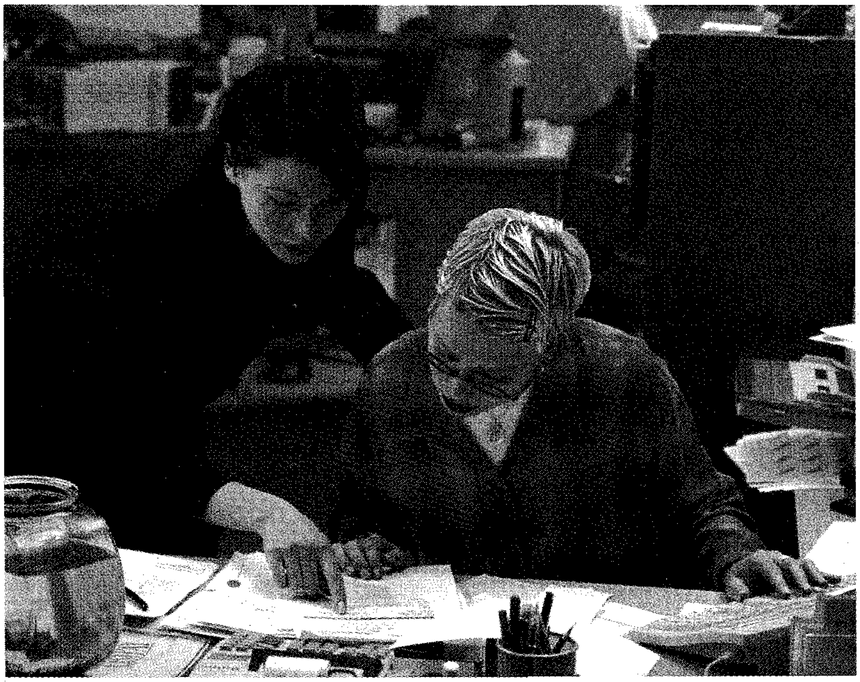
beverly hood allen creative services director **christy casamassima** editor
segal savad creative **tom golden** writer **lory conklin** research

▪ the new school

Adult learners flock to The New School (66 W. 12th Street; 1-800-319-4321x607 or 229-5630; www.nsu.newschool.edu) which offers some 1,500 courses that take conventional and slightly skewed views of such subjects as business and career education, writing, social sciences, humanities, culinary arts, foreign languages, English language studies, music, recreation and physical fitness, science and mathematics, computer instruction, communications, theater and dance, photography and fine arts. Other offerings include five degree and 11 certificate programs. "From noncredit courses to graduate degrees, the programs at The New School this spring are as diverse as today's adult learner," observes acting dean, Elissa Tenny.

"The Career Center teaches practical skills for people trying to advance in their careers, or hoping to change careers."

The New School was the founding division, in 1919, of what has evolved into New School University–an educational powerhouse with seven technologically up-to-the-moment divisions, which recently made headlines nationally by concluding its year-long search for a new president by naming Robert Kerrey, just as he was completing his second term as U. S. senator from Nebraska, after serving as the state's governor from 1983 to 1987.



At The New School, you can advance your career, pick up a new skill, or study something you've always wanted to learn about, in anything from a one-day workshop to a complete degree program, in classroom sessions, or online at your convenience through the New School's Online University program.

The Career Center teaches practical skills for people trying to advance in their careers, or hoping to change careers. The Computer Instruction Center helps students keep up with the ever-changing world of digital communication, and includes three certificate programs. The Writing Program, a creative hotbed since 1931, now includes a Master's in Fine Arts degree with concentrations in fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and writing for children, with many specialized and cross-genre workshops and weekend seminars. The Teacher Education Program offers a master's degree and New York State certification for prospective secondary school teachers. Beginning next fall, in cooperation with the World Policy Institute, The New School will offer two master's degree programs that provide access to the knowledge and experience of senior Institute fellows, as well as the faculty and facilities of The New School's graduate Media Studies Program and Political and Social Science, and the Milano Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy.

Or mix and match your own program from The New School's truly encyclopedic offerings. History studies reach from the French Revolution to a study of Manhattan from pre-Indian times through the building of the Brooklyn Bridge. Vital current areas of debate include human rights, youth culture, sociology of the family, and dimensions of narcissism, as well as such stimulating topics as "Baseball is New York," "Deconstructing Barbie," "Masculinity in America," "The Philosophy of Sex," and the online course "Observing the Night Sky."

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The New School–the leader in adult education – offers more than 1,500 credit and non-credit courses, certificate programs, Bachelor's and Masters' degree programs, on-site or online.

The New School

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ance ensembles to study and perform jazz, blues, chamber music, gospel, and doo-wop, delve into film, sink into a one-day workshops for travelers or a weekend immersion language workshop in French, Italian, or Spanish, even perfect your English for professional purposes. Check it all out for yourself at their open house night slated for Thursday, January 11, from 6 to 8 p.m.

▪ new york university

"Lifelong learning isn't an indulgence–it's a necessity," says David Finney, dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at New York University (50 W. 4th Street; 998-7080; www.scps.nyu.edu). "The impact of technology on our lives," he explains, "dictates that we all accept the challenge of change by constantly upgrading our intellectual knowledge and job skills."

Programs focus on professional-level education that meets the needs of both employers and employees, structured as "industry centers" with curricula developed in consultation with industry leaders who regard the school as a source of talent development. Some of those industry leaders share their hands-on, real-world experience as members of the teaching faculty.

> **"Programs focus on professional-level education that meets the needs of both employers and employees."**

The Virtual College™ at NYU turns cyberspace into a classroom, with everything from individual courses to complete graduate programs available online. Program areas include such noncredit options as writing, speech, information technologies, marketing, law and taxation, management, hospitality, tourism and travel management. Two online graduate programs, offered through the Information Technologies Institute, are a 36-credit Master of Science degree in Management and Systems, and a 16-credit Advanced Professional Certificate in Information Technology.

NYU's Paralegal Diploma Program, approved by the American Bar Association, teaches traditional, library-based research using the world-class NYU School of Law library, as well as computer-based methods using the online WESTLAW database. You can complete the program in two-semesters, during the day, evening, or weekend, or on a one-semester, intensive daytime schedule.

Courses offered by the Center for Advanced Digital Applications, developed in partnership companies that develop and use digital production technology, provide the last word on the state-of-the-art applications, from desktop media to high-end computer graphics. Labs mirror professional production facilities, with more than 60 Silicon Graphics workstations.

The Real Estate Institute, the nation's largest center for professional instruction in this field, covers everything from getting your New York sales license to structuring real estate investment trusts (REITs). Designed specifically for adult students, McGhee Undergraduate Programs provide courses of study in a variety of professional and liberal arts fields, allowing you to begin new studies, or complete work begun elsewhere, even if it was years ago.

NYU offers a wide selection of fast-track intensives taught by working professionals who practice what they teach, combining real-world experience and a strong theoretical foundation. NYU also offers courses in more than 25 languages, from beginner to advanced level, and writing workshops that just might get that idea for a book, story, play, or screenplay out of your head and onto the page.

▪ intensive weekend graduate study at nyu

To make life easier for busy working professionals, NYU's School of Education now offers new opportunities for graduate and professional study in a program that manages to be both intensive and relaxed. Instead of the usual 15 sessions meeting weekly, these courses meet for as few as two weekends or as many as eight Saturdays in a relaxed environment on the Greenwich Village campus. In many cases, students are linked online through Web sites, bulletin boards, and e-mail. Fields of study include applied psychology, communication, educa-

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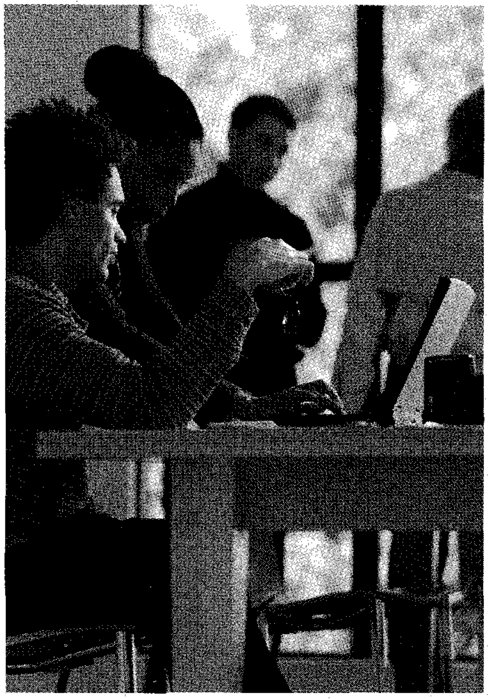

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tion, health and nursing, and such special interests as science education, and nutrition and food studies. And the School of Education continues its 20-year tradition of offering study-abroad options in the fields of psychology (Geneva), education (Oxford), health (Cape Town), studio art (Venice), arts administration (the Netherlands, Spain, Berlin), and theater (London and Ireland).

For complete details on Intensive Weekend Graduate Study, attend the information session on Saturday, January 6, from 11 a.m.-noon, Pless Hall Lounge, 82 Washington Square East.

▪ school of visual arts

Artistic inspiration meets cutting-edge technology at the School of Visual Arts (209 E. 23rd St.; 592-2050; www.schoolofvisualarts.edu). Everything from advertising and computer art to illustration and photography is offered.

"It is the goal of the School of Visual Arts' Division of Continuing Education to create a flexible program that fosters and sustains an environment through which everyone can engage in the lifelong pursuit of knowledge," says executive director of student services, Joseph Cipri. "There's a global awareness reflected in our comprehensive course selection–reaching from Asia's Silk Road to Silicon Valley."

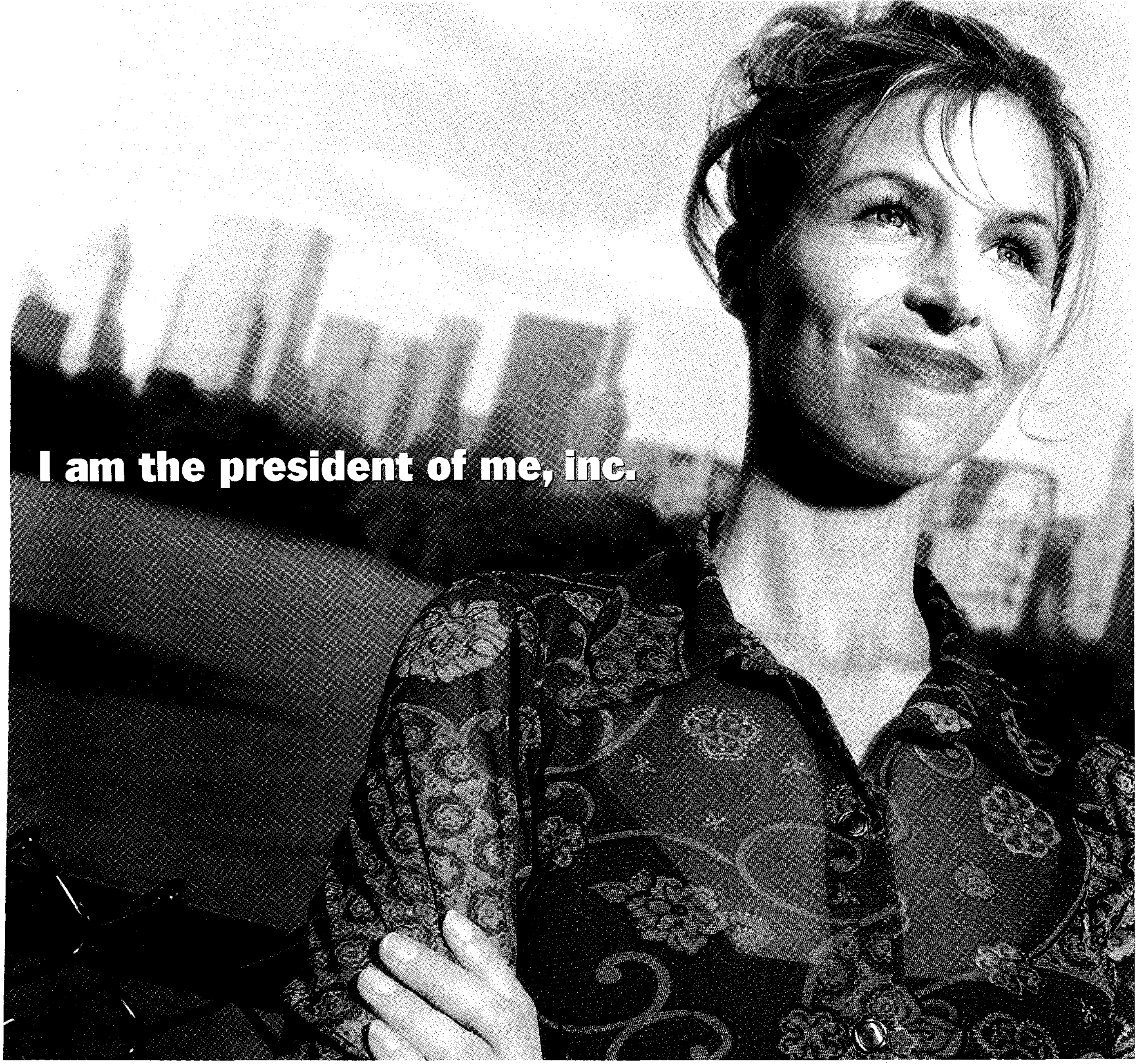
"Study the art of performance photography in a 12-week lecture and demonstration course that improves your technical proficiency and overall picture quality."

This is a constantly evolving program, as evidenced by two new courses that focus on such disparate creative specialties as bringing horror, science fiction, and fantasy characters to life, and photographing performers in action. Learn the secrets of makeup and special effects, including aging, bruises, gashes, and gunshot wounds–in an intensive workshop limited to 14 students. Or study the art of performance photography in a 12-week lecture and demonstration course that improves your technical proficiency and overall picture quality while you learn how to shoot live performances, active sound stages, and sports events. Other photography courses include a study of photographing family and friends, print manipulation using dyes and oil paints on black-and-white prints, and self-portraiture.

Also of special interest is the Global Network series of art mini-courses designed for the artist, art historian, and educator, as well as for the curious non-professional planning to visit other parts of the world. There's a lecture series featuring Islamic art and architecture, Latin American art, and artifacts of the 7,000-mile Silk Road that was a major link between Europe and Asia. There's also a study of public art that includes proposal writing, researching fabrication options, and a discussion of the rights and responsibilities of the artist, as well as the considerations of site-specific, temporary, and permanent installations. And you'll see work under construction during a visit to a fabrication site.

▪ columbia university

If you're an aspiring Ivy Leaguer, you can continue your education in pursuit of a degree, or study anything that interests you without a degree goal, at Columbia University (Broadway at 116th Street.; 1-800-893-0245; www.gs.columbia.edu). At the School of General Studies, you'll earn the same B.A. or B.S. degree granted by Columbia's other colleges, studying with the same arts and sciences faculty, while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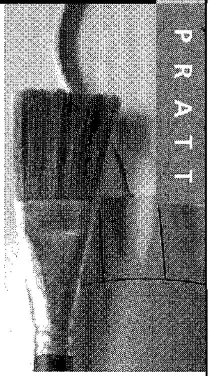

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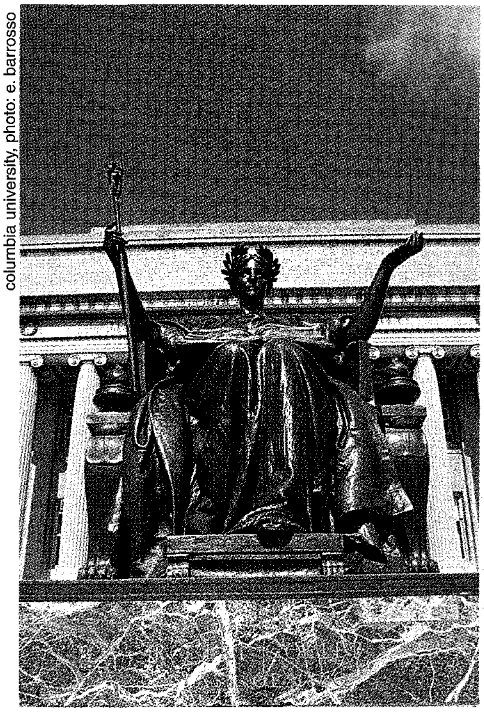

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attending either full time or part time, day or evening, and be able to structure your program according to your own interests. "This is an Ivy League college for serious returning and nontraditional students," says Peter J. Awn, dean of General Studies. "The program is intellectually demanding and highly structured, yet flexible enough to fit the complex schedules of working students." For instance, the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program (1-888-853-6340), the oldest and largest program of its kind in the United States, helps college graduates interested in a career in medicine (but have taken only some of the basic science courses required for admission to medical school) build a strong foundation in the physical and biological sciences while studying with faculty actively engaged in research.

> **"The program is intellectually demanding and highly structured, yet flexible enough to fit the complex schedules of working students."**

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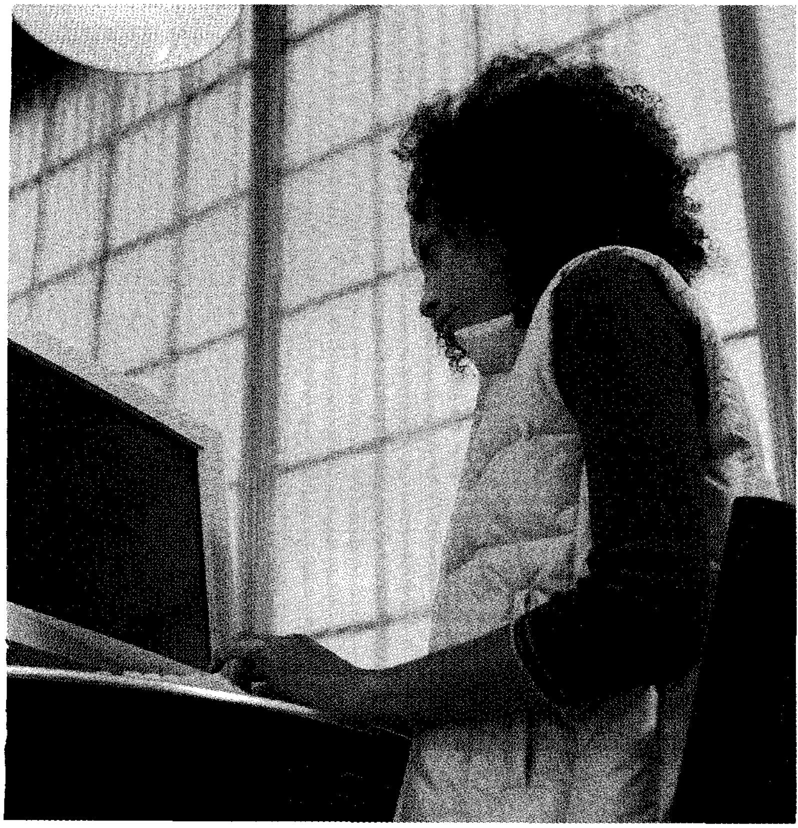

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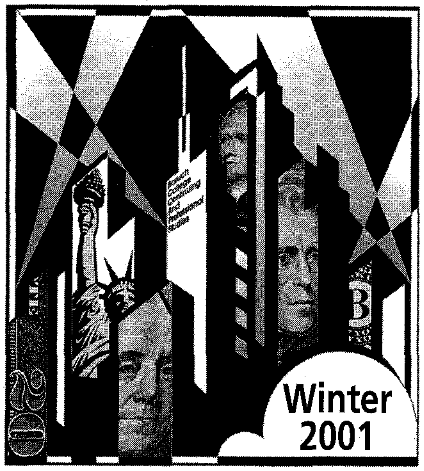

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▪ pace university

Adult learners interested in gaining specialized skills in the shortest possible time take advantage of the certificate programs at Pace University (1 Pace Plaza, opposite City Hall Park; 346-1943; Adult Enrollment, www.pace.edu). Options include studies in business, computer science, and the arts, as well as customized degree programs. The Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Computer Studies is a perfect fit for anyone

with on-the-job experience who's interested in earning a degree in the field. The Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Studies and Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal Studies are tailored to adults returning to school after several years in the working world. In each of these programs, you can qualify for up to 36 credits for Pace courses for college-level learning experience outside a formal academic setting. And work you've done for on-the-job projects can earn you Credit for Life Experience if you submit a resume, an autobiography, and a written description of the learning experience as it applies to Pace coursework.

■ pratt institute

Develop your art skills or build your career at Pratt's Center for Continuing and Professional Studies (295 Lafayette Street; 461-6040 and 200 Willoughby Avenue; 718-636-3453; www.Pro Studies.pratt.edu). Courses in Manhattan, at the Puck Building, boast hot new programs including a printmaking workshop, introductory through advanced computer graphic and technology courses, the decorative arts, Webcasting, animation, and Adobe Web programs. You can earn a certificate in computer graphics, tailored to your own goals and career objectives, working on the same state-of-the-art equipment and software used in top electronic design offices. At the Brooklyn Campus Pratt offers printmaking, metalworking, painting, and digital art classes. Or move even farther afield, studying abroad with Pratt–learn architecture and design in Copenhagen, painting, drawing, and design in Tuscany and Venice, and fashion in London, Paris, and Milan.

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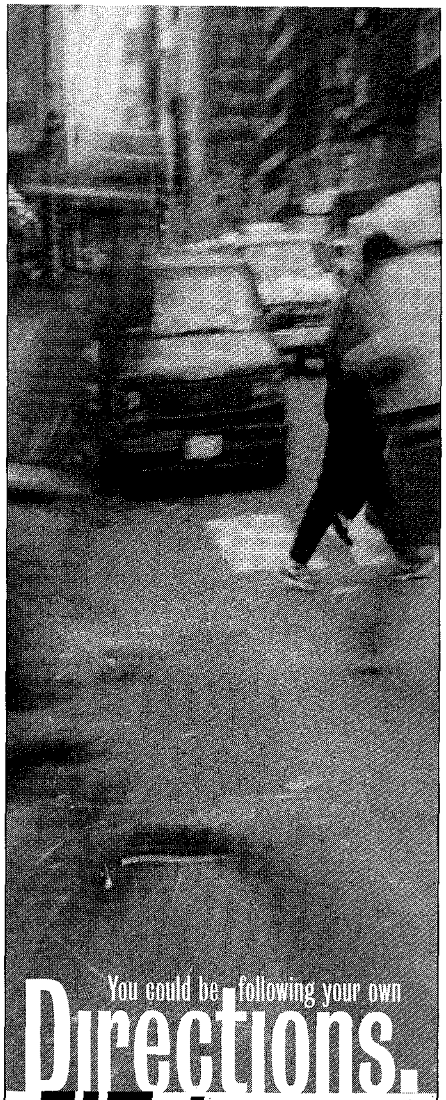

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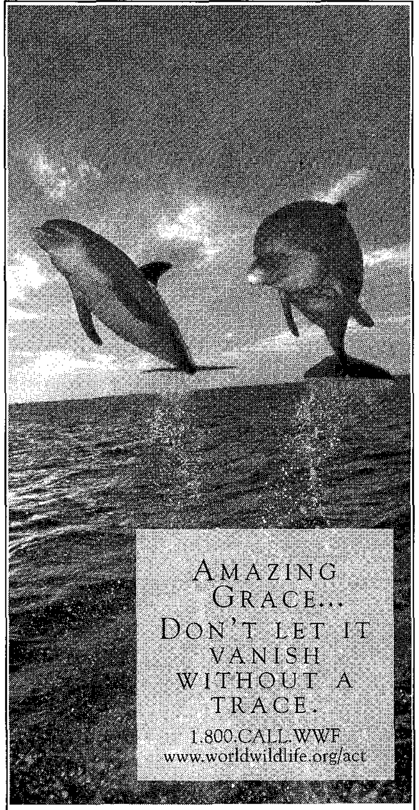
The New TalkPower: The Mind-Body Way to Speak Without Fear by Natalie H. Rogers (Capital Books) is now available from Amazon.com or your local bookstore!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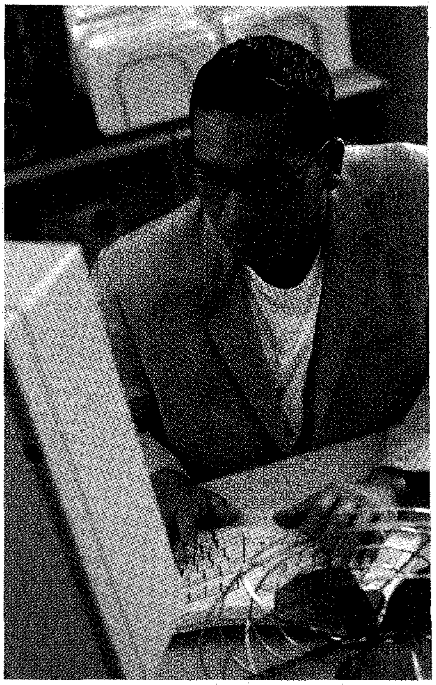

■ baruch college

It is difficult to imagine a professional or personal interest that won't be satisfied at the Division of Continuing and Professional Studies at Baruch College (17 Lexington Ave. at 23rd Street; 802-5600; www.success.baruch.cuny.edu). There are certificate programs in business, entertainment management, e-commerce, desktop publishing for print and the Internet, and computer studies aimed at a wide range of the latest hardware and software. The comprehensive paralegal certificate program offers many pathways into the field of law, and a real estate certificate program that's a fast track into that market. The new Entry-Level Professional Preparation Program helps you upgrade current office skills or learn new ones. Baruch also offers interactive language instruction to prepare you for a job or your next vacation, and a Savvy at Sixty program that provides answers to questions about all things financial, legal, health, and even computer literacy for seniors.

▪ gotham writers' workshop

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"Work on your novel, screenplay, sitcom, or children's book during a one-day intensive or 10-week course"

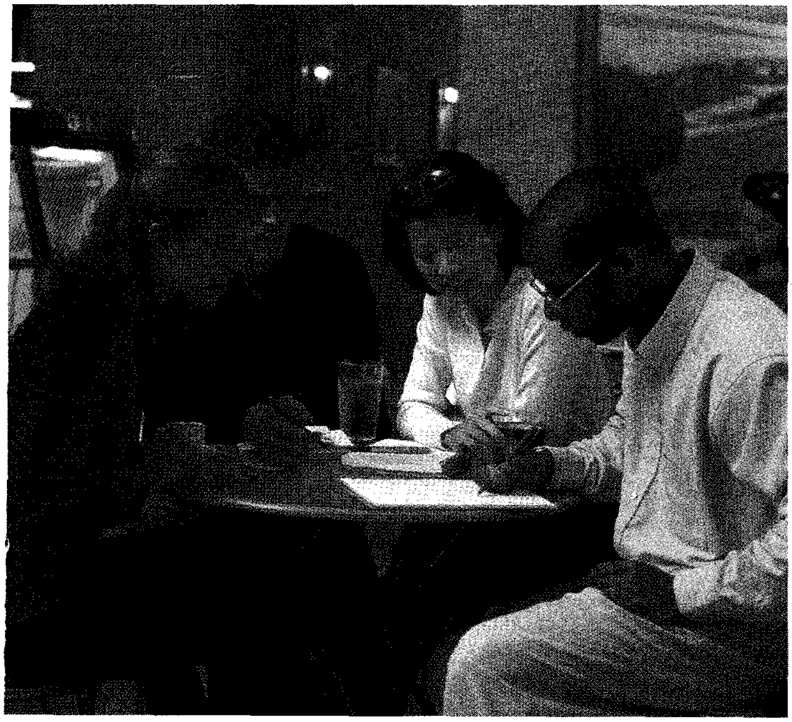

photo: Matthew Septim
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▪ talkpower

During her 22 years of conducting weekend-long TalkPower Seminars (333 E. 23rd. St.; 684-1711; www.talkpowerinc.com), noted behavioral psychotherapist Natalie H. Rogers has freed the tongue-tied by dealing with public speaking as a coordination skill, like learning to ride a bicycle. "I teach people to think about the speech, not the audience," she says, "and I offer them step-by-step methods to eliminate the dread, the adrenaline rush, the rapid heartbeat, the trembling, and the rambling that are the anguish of public speaking." Lately Ms. Rogers has been touring the country in support of her latest book, *The New TalkPower: The Mind-Body Way to Speak Without Fear* (Capitol Books, available on amazon.com), which features the same techniques and helpful tips that are the core of her weekend workshops, including templates for all types of speeches, and a sampler of lively quotes. Upcoming TalkPower Seminars are January 27-28, February 24-25, March 31-April 1, May 5-6, and June 23-24.

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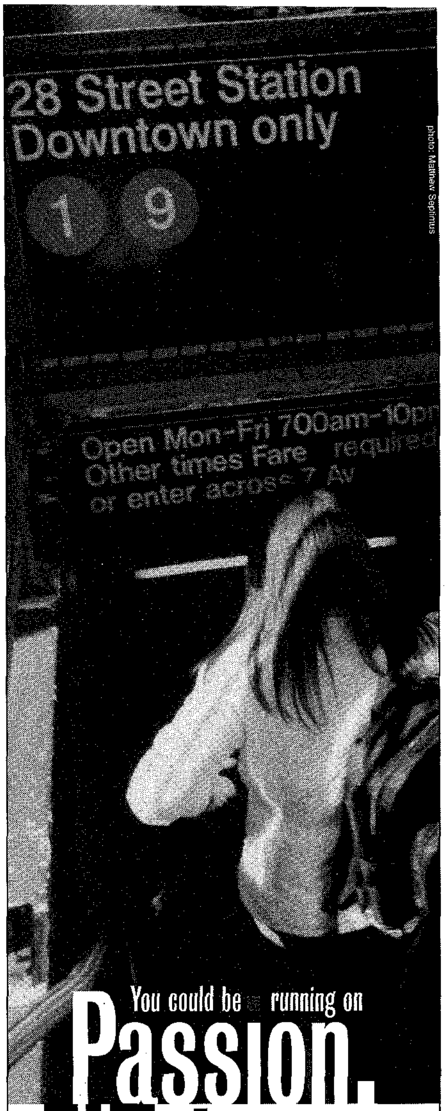

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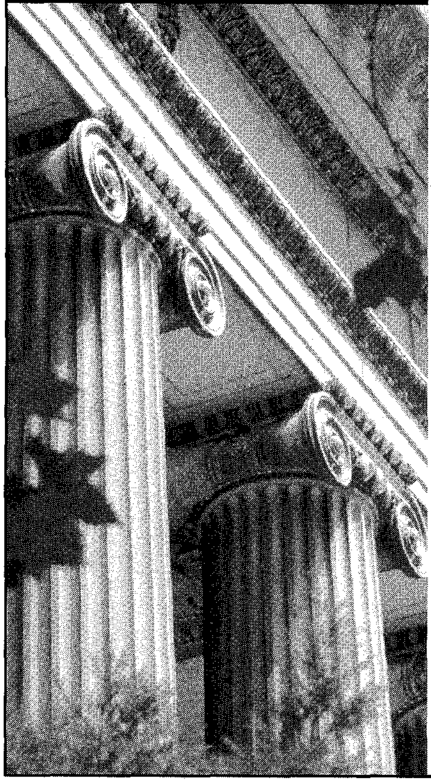

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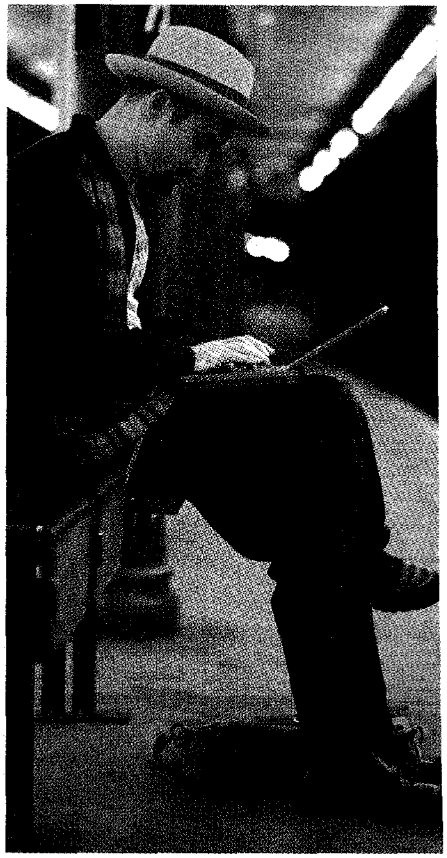

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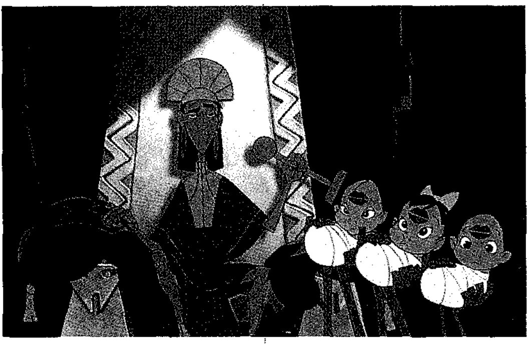
cue

A Weekly Guide to Culture and Upcoming Events

Edited by Christopher Bonanos



Movies

The Emperor's New Groove

Opens December 15

We'll pay nine bucks to see any animation for which Eartha Kitt provides a voice—especially when she plays an ancient, wizened diva with magical powers. David Spade (who, let's face it, *is* an animated figure) and John Goodman star; Sting sings. (See listing, page 204.)

Kids

Mummenschanz Next

At Alice Tully Hall

Perhaps the only mime troupe that doesn't make Americans cringe comes back to town. You can pretend you're enjoying it ironically, as seventies kitsch; meanwhile, your kids will love the brainy antics onstage. And, just maybe, keep quiet. (See listing, page 240.)

Best of the Week

Theater

A Christmas Carol

At the Theater at Madison Square Garden

With loopy staging and touching songs by Alan Menken and Lynne Ahrens, the Garden's *Christmas Carol* is already a classic. This year, Frank Langella clanks along as Scrooge (see page 216) . . .

Restaurants

A Christmas Carol Afternoon Tea

At the Four Seasons Hotel

. . . but before you get to the Garden, you need to eat, right? Chef Susan Weaver's luxe meal is based on Dickens's own manuscript (on display now at the Morgan Library, by the way). Mince pies, scones with jam and cream, something called "Twelfth cake"—you heard it here first, English food *can* be good. Through December 24; call 212-758-5700 to reserve.

Classical Music

Handel's *Messiah*

December 15 and 20

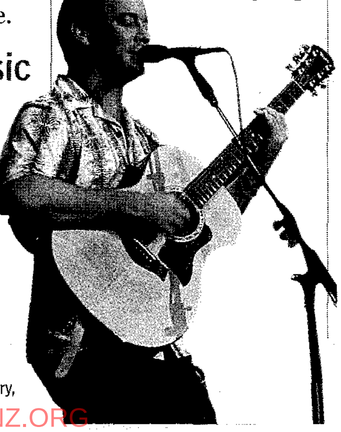
On your feet, people! One traditional *Messiah,* one update: At Carnegie Hall, the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra does the regal work justice, piccolo trumpets and all. And at the Bottom Line, *The Downtown Messiah* adds folk, jazz, rock, and blues to the score. (See listings, page 233.)

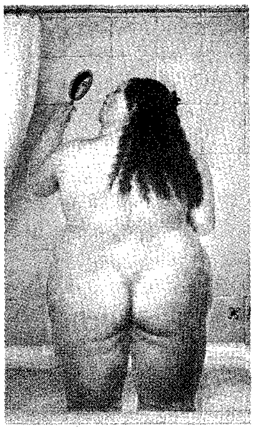
Nightlife

Dave Matthews Band

At Madison Square Garden

Hacky Sack–kicking, van-dwelling fans will fill the Garden with more blue smoke than anytime since the Messrs. Garcia, Lesh, Hart, et al. played their last. Expect to overhear at least one of the following legalize-hemp arguments: *George Washington grew it, man! You can make rope from it! And fabric! It's only illegal because of Big Tobacco* . . . (See listing, page 238.)





Books

Fernando Botero: Monograph and Catalogue Raisonné, 1975–1990

Editions Acatos; $289

Famous for his paintings of the extremely well-fed, Botero seldom appears in public. (Body-image issues, probably.) But he'll be signing his hugely expensive new book at the Marlborough Gallery this week. The word *Rubenesque* will also be making at least one appearance. (Pictured, *El Baño,* 1978; see listing, page 241.)

Photographs clockwise from top left: courtesy of Walt Disney Pictures; © Fernando Botero, courtesy of Marlborough Gallery, New York; Steve Jennings/Retna; Firooz Zahedi.

Primal Screens

Stranded on a South Pacific island, Tom Hanks dreams of life with Helen Hunt; Meg Ryan and Russell Crowe go gaga over each other in a South American jungle.

TOM HANKS PLAYS FEDERal Express systems engineer Chuck Noland in **Cast Away**, and his job takes him all over the world with very little advance notice. He's such a manic, time-is-money company man that it comes as something of a relief to us when he ends up stranded, after a plane crash, on a remote and uninhabited island in the South Pacific. Only the memory of his girlfriend Kelly (Helen Hunt), whom he intended to propose to on New Year's Eve, keeps hope alive—her Christmas gift to him, a family-heirloom timepiece with her picture inside, becomes his talisman.

At its most basic level, *Cast Away* is a graceful and powerfully rendered survivalist saga. Hanks's Everyman quality has never been more aptly utilized: He's the perfect stand-in for all of us who never made it to Eagle Scout. Robert Zemeckis, who directed from a script by William Broyles Jr., doesn't overdo the Robinson Crusoe stuff; we get just enough information to show us how Chuck makes it through. With virtually no dialogue for long stretches of the movie, Hanks brings us very close to the man's utter terror and loneliness.

And yet there's something generic about Chuck's plight. Zemeckis has said that his movie is "not so much about the survival of a human being but rather the survival of the human spirit," and this tone of uplift sits heavily on the story. *Cast Away* turns out to be a movie about what is important in life—about what all that surviving is *for*. We're supposed to divine, along with Chuck, life's higher purpose. The filmmakers don't opt for the usual happy-face Hollywood ending, but even the half-smile they provide smacks of inspirationalism. Hanks, who conceived this project years ago and clearly has an emotional investment in it, wants us to be carried away by the power of faith and redemption. But he's too good, too honest an actor to fully buy into his own agenda. He brings a bleakness to Chuck that extends right through to the end of the movie, and it's too unsettling for this instructional fable of hope. What I took away from *Cast Away* was not its mite of message but instead the image of Chuck shrouded in seclusion, with no companion but a washed-up volleyball from the plane crash, onto which he has painted, in his own blood, a human face.

No enchanted evenings: Hanks, stranded, in *Cast Away*.

Cast Away
Directed by Robert Zemeckis; written by William Broyles Jr.; starring Tom Hanks, Helen Hunt.

•

Proof of Life
Directed by Taylor Hackford; written by Tony Gilroy; starring Russell Crowe, Meg Ryan, and David Morse.

•

Pollock
Directed by Ed Harris; written by Barbara Turner and Susan J. Emshwiller; starring Ed Harris and Marcia Gay Harden.

•

O Brother, Where Art Thou?
Directed Joel Coen; written by Homer and Ethan & Joel Coen; starring George Clooney, John Turturro, Tim Blake Nelson, and John Goodman.
See Movies listings for details.

A GOOD SUBJECT IS THOROUGHLY and methodically wasted in Taylor Hackford's **Proof of Life**, starring Meg Ryan and Russell Crowe, which is about the kidnapping of an American engineer in a South American country and the attempt by a professional ransom consultant to negotiate his release. Apparently it is now big business for terrorists—mostly mercenaries and drug lords with dubious revolutionary political ties—to abduct high-level American executives from their foreign-based posts. (The film takes off from a *Vanity Fair* article, "Adventures in the Ransom Trade," by Bill Prochnau, and Thomas Hargrove's autobiography.) American corporations doing business overseas routinely factor into their insurance policies the costs of abduction, spawning in the process a new industry of kidnap negotiators consisting mainly of ex-CIA, SAS, KGB, and FBI agents.

In *Proof of Life*, the abducted engineer (David Morse) is left stranded when the corporation he works for goes belly-up, and so it falls to Russell Crowe's Terry Thorne, a tight-lipped former SAS commando turned hostage negotiator, to bring him out of the jungles alive. Meg Ryan's Alice is the engineer's wife, and the pre-kidnap scenes with her husband convey the all-too-convenient revelation that her marriage is wobbly. Being in a bad marriage allows Alice to shoot smoldering glances at Terry and still retain audience sympathy, even as her spouse, growing progressively hairier as the film lugs along until he resembles a woolly

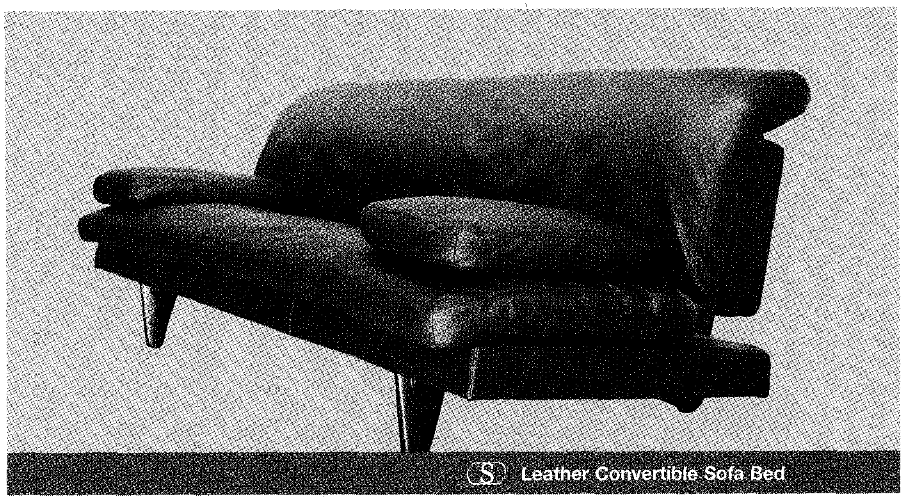
Photograph by Zade Rosenthal.

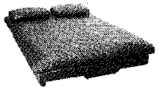
mammoth, is repeatedly battered and tortured for our delectation.

Ryan and Crowe, despite all the real-life publicity surrounding their pairing, never get to indulge in anything more than a chaste kiss, and so all the strong-silent simmering between them seems kind of a cheat; after all the teeth-gritting and hacked limbs, we have a right to expect from this romance more than a wimpy *Casablanca*-style fade-out. But the political-thriller genre has been in the doldrums since the end of the Cold War. *Proof of Life* tries to resuscitate the Cold War mentality by portraying former communist rebels as hepped-up, doped-up curs; they make the banditos who converged upon Humphrey Bogart in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* seem statesmanlike by comparison. The only proof of life in this moribund movie comes from Pamela Reed's brief turn as Alice's sister. She packs so much intensity into every line and gesture that she gives her cameo the fullness of a starring role.

ED HARRIS HAS WANTED TO MAKE A FILM about Jackson Pollock for more than a decade, and now that he's finally made it, you can see why. Harris has always been an intensely kinesthetic performer as well as the rough-hewn inheritor of the Brando-Dean tradition of action acting. Pollock, flexing his Ab Ex muscles, was the archetypal action painter, and his doomy, boozy persona, as much as his art, was an icon of postwar bohemianism. He would sometimes paint straight from the tube, and his life seemed to come straight from the tube, too; he poured everything out and yet could also seem furiously inhibited and forbidding. He was an inchoate orgiast, and Harris, who both directed and stars in **Pollock**, captures the artist's divided soul. Harris doesn't go in for a lot of great-man posturing, and there aren't many of the *Aha!* moments one might expect from a Hollywood film about a famous painter. (Pollock's discovery of his "drip technique" is admirably underplayed.)

Instead we get an almost punishingly exact portrait of a pathologically thin-skinned genius who reacted to the slights and upheavals of life with an almost feral intuitiveness. The real Jackson Pollock was cannier about the way he played into the American public's perception of the artist-as-outlaw than the Pollock of this picture. Harris's Pollock is all instinct, and you can





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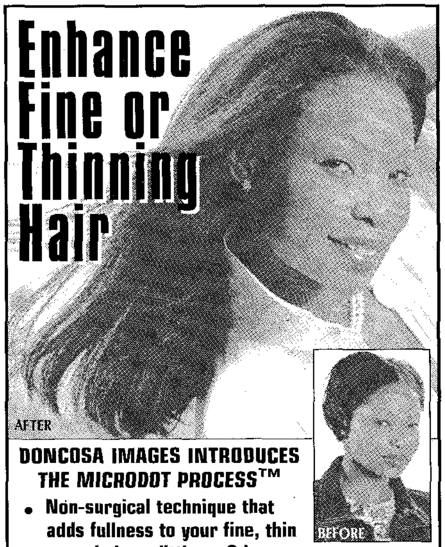

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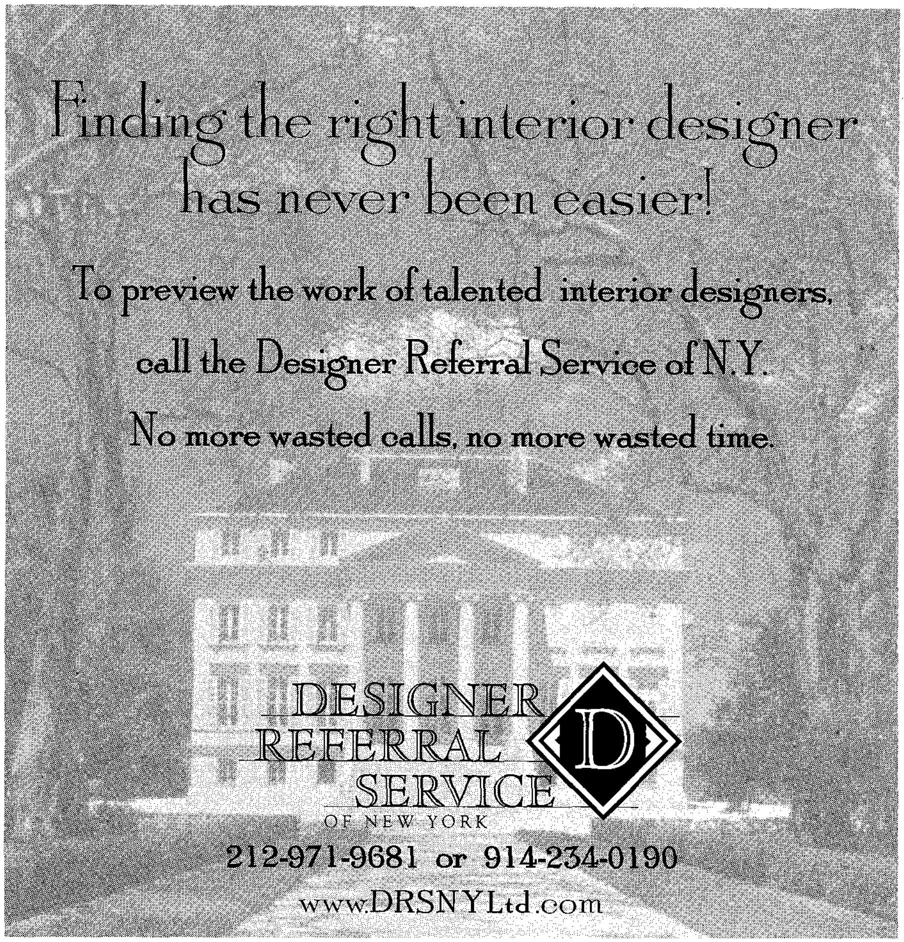

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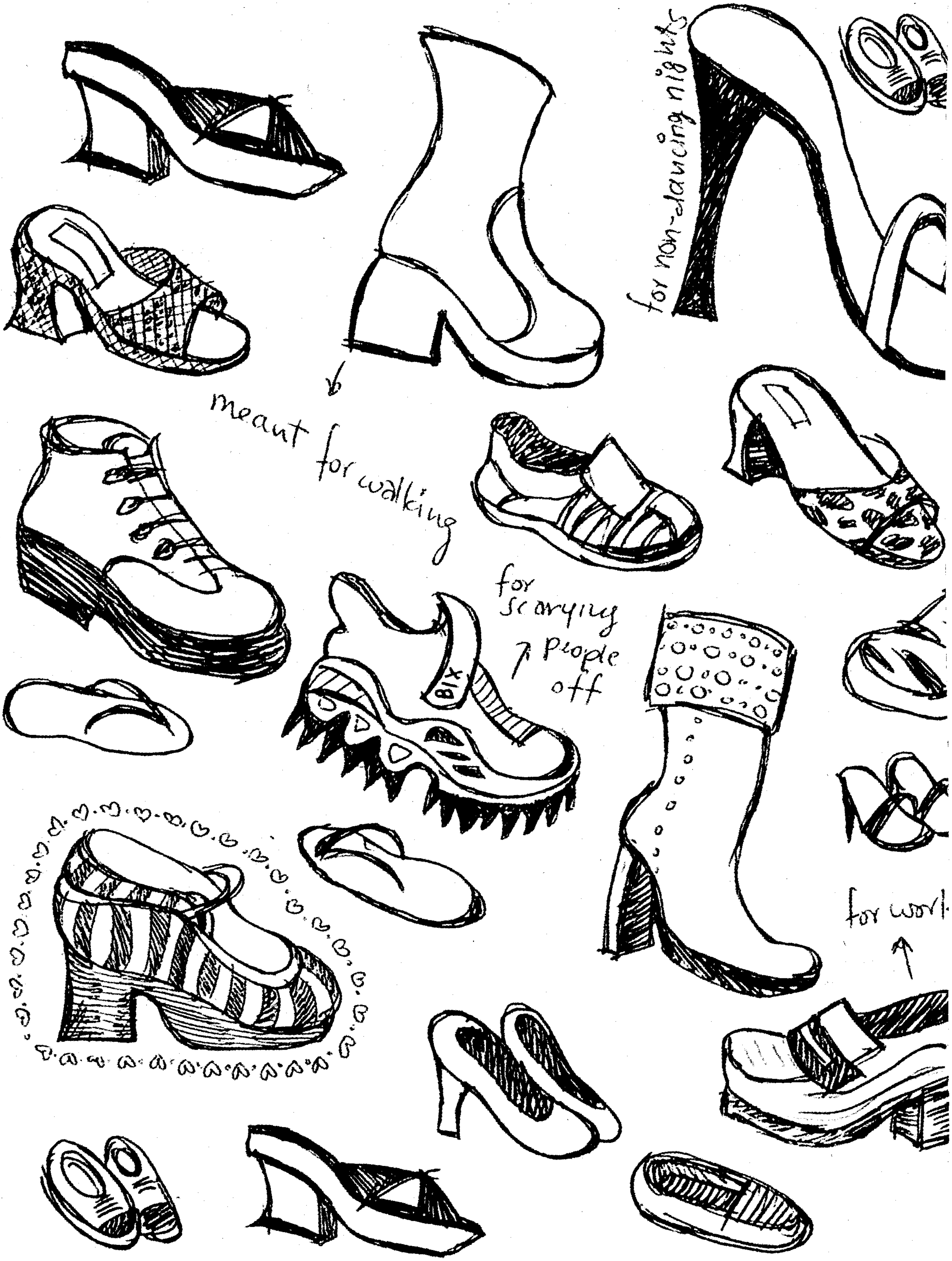
see in his raging, self-dramatizing physicality what fascinated and repelled his coterie of lovers and admirers and hangers-on. He's an immensely, insufferably liberating force, and one of the film's great achievements is its depiction of the ardent purgatory of Pollock's marriage to Lee Krasner (Marcia Gay Harden, who is very fine in a difficult role).

As a first-time director, Harris isn't as powerfully expressive as he is as an actor; the script, by Barbara Turner and Susan J. Emshwiller, is rather conventional, and Harris doesn't attempt to come up with a visual or emotional equivalent to his subject's art (which is what Robert Altman achieved in his Van Gogh movie, *Vincent & Theo*). The result is somewhat confounding: a methodical, straightforward movie about a hair-trigger iconoclast. But Harris as an actor does justice to his long-term passion to play Pollock. When you think of his performance and then think back to the famous Hans Namuth movies of Pollock at work, they merge together in the mind. They share the same swagger and creepy, closed-off intensity.

O Brother, Where Art Thou? IS SET IN Depression-era Mississippi, but its real locale is that rarefied and icy-hot postmodern nowheresville peculiar to the Coen brothers. This time around, though, the Coens' usual arch deliberateness isn't quite as deliberate, and there's an appealing shagginess to some of the episodes and performances. The plot is a variation on *The Odyssey*, with three escaped convicts from a chain gang, played by George Clooney, John Turturro, and Tim Blake Nelson, encountering sirens, a blind prophet, and a cyclops (John Goodman as a jolly, homicidal Bible salesman wearing an eye patch).

In most of the Coens' movies, it seems as if the brothers are up in the clouds taking potshots at their people, but here they seem more indulgent and affectionate. The paradox of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* is that it's a facetious tall tale that still manages to mix in the most unreasonably beautiful country-folk music, including a rendition, by Ralph Stanley, of "O Death" that is doubly shattering because the character doing the singing is a Klansman. This is the Coen brothers' most emotionally felt movie, and that's not meant as faint praise. ■

what do you really fantasize about?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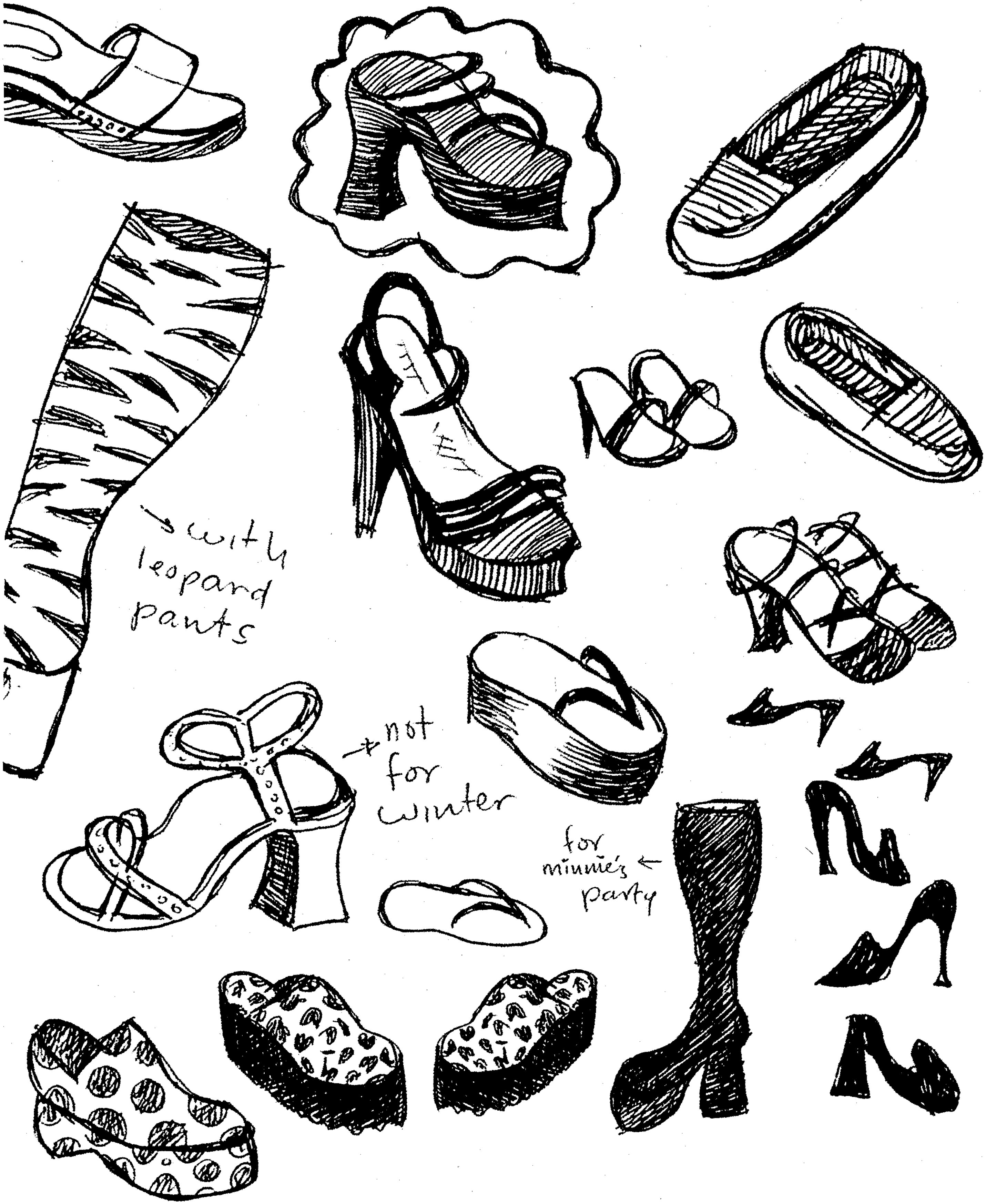

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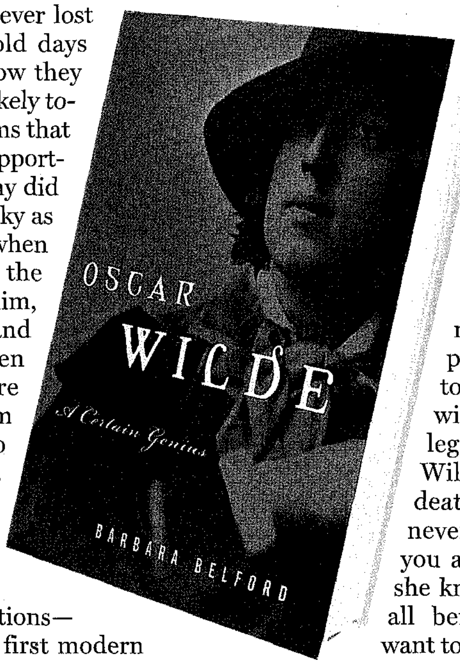
DANIEL MENDELSOHN

Proud Mary?

Oscar Wilde's undoing, according to a new biography, was his hopeless preference for ostentatious wit over meaningful art. So why is he a gay martyr?

OSCAR WILDE'S DEATH HAS been claimed as a martyrdom by so many worthy causes that it's easy to forget that what really did him in was vanity, lousy taste (in boyfriends, at least), and a secret hunger for bourgeois respectability. Four days after the opening of *The Importance of Being Earnest* on February 14, 1895, the Marquess of Queensberry, the unbalanced and vindictive father of Wilde's 24-year-old lover, Lord Alfred "Bosie" Douglas, left a calling card at Wilde's club addressed to "Oscar Wilde, posing as a somdomite [*sic*]." The day after Wilde received the card, he requested a warrant for the marquess's arrest on the charge of publishing a libel against him. One small problem: Wilde *was* a "sodomite." Married to Constance Lloyd in 1884, he had his first affair with another man in 1887; a few years later, he fell stupidly in love with the spoiled, blond-and-blue-eyed Bosie, who introduced him to the world of male prostitutes. Wilde's friends were realistic enough to see that a public trial would surely put the playwright, then at the pinnacle of his success, at risk of exposure and disgrace, and they advised him to tear up the card and leave the country. He didn't. The result was that he not only lost his suit against Queensberry but was subsequently tried and convicted for "acts of gross indecency." Two years of hard labor broke spirit and health; increasingly destitute and forsaken, he ended up in Paris, where he died, almost exactly a hundred years ago, on November 30, 1900, at the age of 46.



Anyone who's been seduced by the glitter and brilliance of Wilde's work—the popular comedies, as shiny and intricate as Fabergé eggs; the moody and still shockingly unsentimental *Picture of Dorian Gray;* the razor-sharp epigrams that have never lost their edge ("In the old days men had the rack, now they have the Press")—is likely today to ask the questions that Wilde's friends and supporters asked in 1895. Why did he pursue a suit so risky as to be suicidal? Why, when it became clear that the police would arrest him, did he stay in England when, it seemed, even the authorities were trying to leave him time to escape to France? Barbara Belford's new biography of Wilde comes closer than most to offering a satisfying answer to those questions—that with Wilde, the first modern media celebrity, a hubristic belief in his own self-proclaimed "genius" required notoriety at any cost.

Unfortunately, Belford's book is so uneven that its vices end up obscuring its virtues. Little in her book will come as news to Wilde fans. Once again, you get the bohemian Dublin childhood (Wilde's flamboyant mother is a Freudian's dream); the intellectual precociousness of his school years; his marriage to the almost masochistically loyal Constance and his affairs with younger men; the growing success of the poems, novel, and plays that appeared from the mid-1880s through the mid-1890s; the dizzying popularity and, suddenly, the crushing disgrace. If you sense more obligation than inspiration in Belford's retelling of this tale, it's not entirely her fault: Richard Ellmann's meticulous 1987 life of Wilde has left little new ground for biographers to cover. The most substantive "new" point she makes has to do with whether Wilde contracted syphilis in college. Lacking Ellmann's rich documentation, Belford's narrative often feels hectic—it's annoyingly easy to lose track of what year you're in—and there are maddeningly superficial references to events (a meeting with Proust, the alleged explosion of Wilde's body on his deathbed) that she never bothers to tell you about in full, as if she knows we've read it all before and doesn't want to bore us.

Oscar Wilde: A *Certain Genius*
By Barbara Belford.
Random House; 385 pages; $29.95.

The real interest here lies in the refreshingly anti-hagiographic emphasis on Wilde's life as "a triumph of flippancy over genius." "What has he done, this young man, that one meets him everywhere?" the Polish actress Helen Modjeska mused in 1880. The answer was, essentially, "Nothing": Wilde was twentysomething at the time, had published nothing of note, yet was already such a celebrity for his "aesthete" posturing that he was booked for an American lecture tour. Wilde's writing seems to have been less the inevitable product of urgent creative impulses than the means to achieve his real goal of "success, fame, or even notoriety" with the least amount of effort. (He "could not endure the sedentary toil of creative art," his friend Yeats observed.) No wonder his plays, however delightful, are like theatrical soap bubbles: shiny outsides with nothing inside—nothing, that is, but Wilde himself. He "peoples his plays with male and female editions of himself," his brother Willie grumbled. A genius above all at talking (not *with* but *at*

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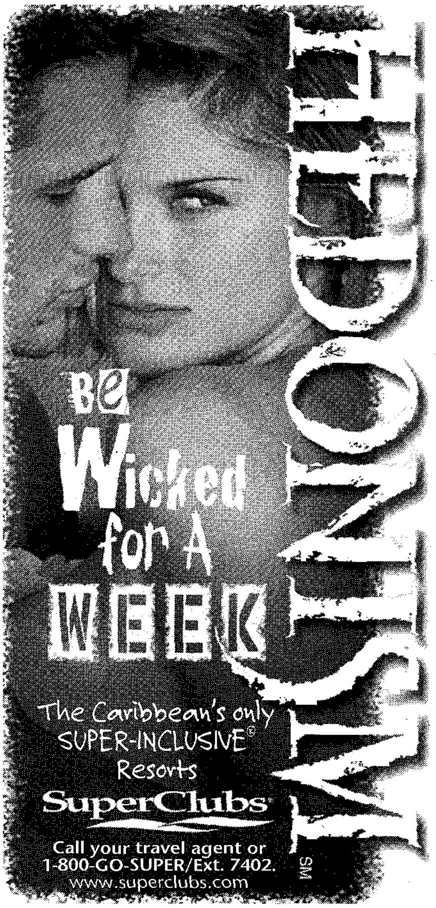
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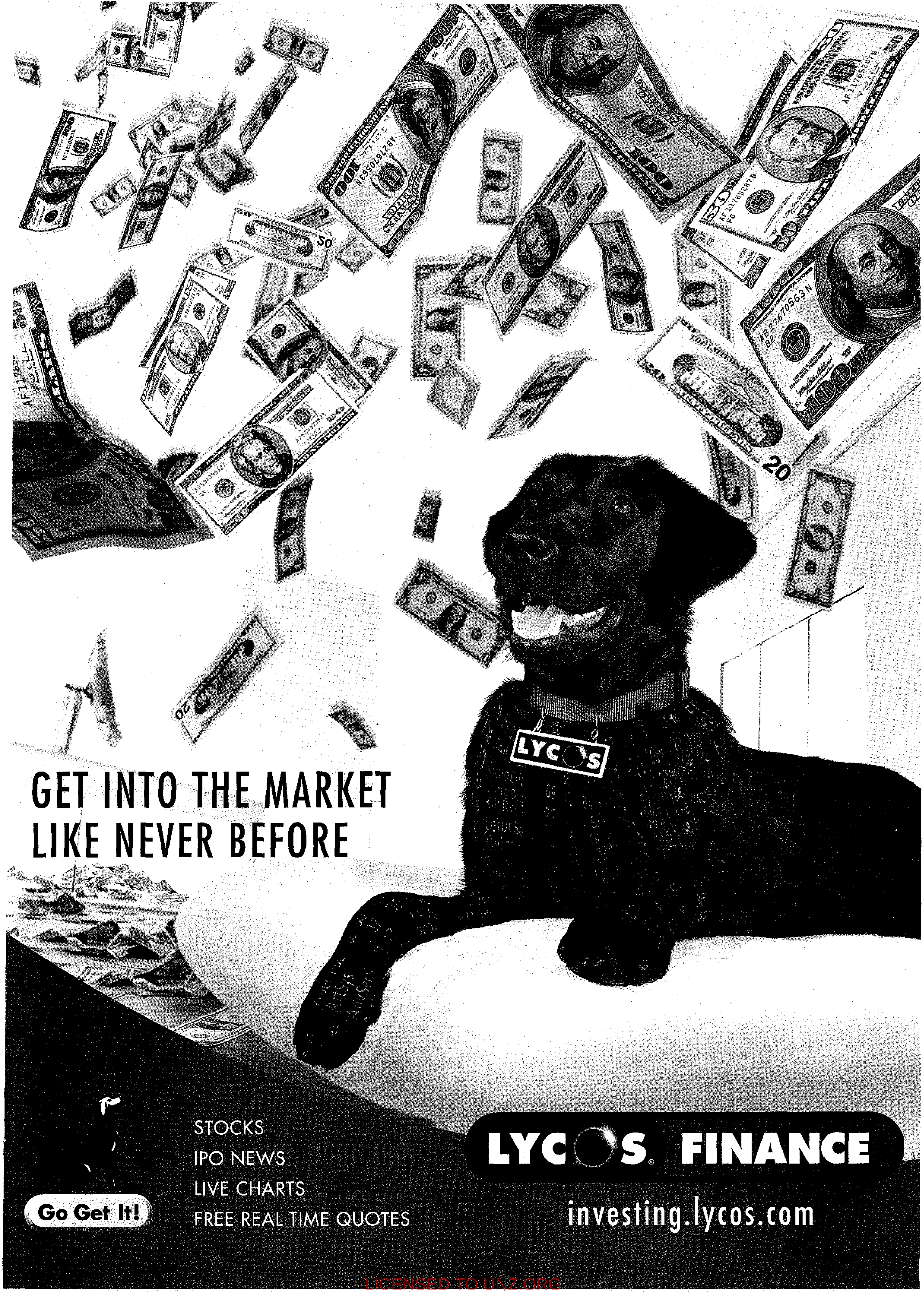
people: "incapable of friendship" was Shaw's verdict), Wilde found a genre that allowed him to transcribe his brilliant conversation—to be, as Belford rightly emphasizes, the real *"objet d'art."*

Given Belford's perspective, it's especially unfortunate that her book is marred by many annoying stylistic tics. Among these are some heavy-handed, CliffsNotes-y attempts to connect Wilde's life and work; inappropriate interjections about what Wilde "should" have done at this or that point; and a prose style that her fastidious subject would surely have had a field day with. "The language was mostly verbal," she writes. (*Nu?*) Worse, her laudable desire to "reclaim Wilde in all the brilliant details of his contradictions" often confusingly gives way to the usual cheerleading for Wilde as "the bravest of men in his refusal to pretend to be other than what he was." But it was pretending to be just that, of course, that led to Wilde's downfall. "Everyone turns out to be someone else," Wilde wrote; this is true of no one so much as Wilde the gay-culture hero. He suffered and died, after all, not because he was some kind of gay-rights activist *avant la lettre*—living "out, loud, and proud" right under Victoria's nose—but, if anything, because he wanted to remain comfortably in the closet and have his double life. And, as you can't help inferring from Belford's persuasive portrait of her publicity-drunk subject, because he couldn't resist another opportunity to show off, to glitter.

This he did, at a fatal price. "The chance of an epigram makes me desert truth," Wilde once told Arthur Conan Doyle; how ironic that it was a truthful epigram that undid him. Asked at his trial if he'd kissed a certain boy, an ostentatiously amused Wilde replied, "Oh, dear, no . . . He was unfortunately extremely ugly"; the inadvertent suggestion that he would have kissed the boy had he been pretty was, in effect, the turning point of the trial. Whatever its faults, Belford's book does provide a coherent context for seeing Wilde's behavior in this climactic act of his life for what it sadly was: the fatal triumph of flippant epigram over real genius. For that reason if for no other, this biography should help raise a brand-new question about Wilde: Isn't it time for a saint who was martyred for substance rather than style? ■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Snoozical

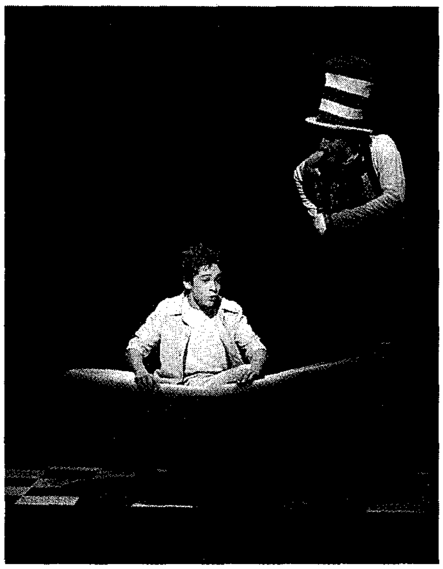
Seussical the musical leaves you . . . well, you get the point; Wendy Wasserstein squanders *Old Money*, and Robert Wilson slices and dices Strindberg.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND **Seussical** the musical aimed at an audience from 7 to 77. They may have got the more infantile 7 and the senile 77; they didn't get what lies between. A potentially amiable show became something that only (see the ads) Rosie O'Donnell and Liz Smith could love. Here and there a bit of talent, an idea or two, make their mark; the rest is all militantly cheerful, mercilessly whimsical murk.

Just about everything went wrong, starting with the music of Stephen Flaherty, the lyrics of Lynn Ahrens, and the book by both perpetrators, with Eric Idle as accessory. By picking bits from several Dr. Seuss books, they came up with a patchwork instead of a story line; by retaining some of Dr. Seuss's writing and grafting onto it their inferior own, they achieved further destabilization. Rather than speak the sooth, or the Seuss, they speak with worse than forked—at the very least trifurcating—tongues: They speak mishmash, about as faithful to Seuss as Messalina was to the emperor Claudius.

There are two kinds of songs: the generic and the simplistic, with only the *Lion King*-ish "Solla Sollew" and the eclectic "Havin' a Hunch" showing signs of at least borrowed life. The choreography, by Kathleen Marshall, is similarly uninspired, hurtling from cute to desperate without passing Go. Kathleen's brother, the genuinely talented Rob Marshall, was brought in to revise Frank Galati's direction (Galati was the worst possible choice for a cute show), but true redirecting would have required not a director but a dam builder.

The producers seem to have scapegoated Catherine Zuber's costumes and Eugene Lee's sets for their fiasco in Boston. Zuber, apparently, stuck too close to Seuss, which strikes me as correct. They brought in William Ivey Long, a specialist in sophistication, and his costumes now look like a nightmare cross between Arcimboldo and Vegas. Lee, who excels at the stark or structural, was another wrong choice. The clever Tony Walton, brought in to brighten things up, could not quite remove the *ereal* from funereal. Natasha Katz, usually splendid, turns stage and auditorium into one huge dance hall, but a Roseland by any other name is still a Roseland.



Is there a doctor in the house? Anthony Blair Hall and David Shiner in *Seussical*.

The concept and casting of the characters is the final catastrophe. As the Cat in the Hat, the charmless David Shiner, a somber clown, is miscast; minus the menace, he is a shiner in the eye of the show. Kevin Chamberlin does what can be done with a Horton made to look less like an elephant than like an elephant hunter. As the wife of the Mayor of Whoville, the able Alice Playten is saddled with a poor part and poorer Mayor. As their son, Anthony Blair Hall is too big for a Who child and too small for a Tom Hanks look-alike. At least Michele Pawk, however mannered, infuses much-needed sass into Mayzie LaBird.

The rest, men and women alike, seem to have been chosen for their lack of appeal, mistaken for humor. Janine LaManna, as Gertrude McFuzz, is a cuckoo hatched in a songbird's nest. The Bird Girls are a trio of trying grotesques. Most bizarre is hefty Sharon Wilkins, the least of the red-hot mamas, as the Sour Kangaroo, whose credibility requires a quantum leap of faith. Her baby is a hand puppet, for which she is totally unable to ventriloquize a voice. The minor characters and chorus members perform with the grinning despair with which slave workers in a Siberian salt mine would strain to improve their lot. *Seussical* may be a woozical or a Whosical, but a musical it's not.

IN WENDY WASSERSTEIN'S **Old Money**, some rich people are enjoying—well, enduring—a dinner party with a complex secret agenda in a sumptuous Upper East Side mansion. There is ample talk about money, art, and relationships, but soon the same characters, mostly playing their own forebears, start wandering in as the play shuttles back and forth, sometimes frantically, between two not quite consecutive generations. Eventually, we meet some of the characters at a still later stage, and a member of a subsequent generation.

As played by eight actors with at least two parts each, the piece becomes a display of how quickly actors can change wigs and costumes, and I lost track of who was doing what to whom, and how one thing bore on another. At times Miss Wasserstein wrote in her own voice, at

Seussical
Music by Stephen Flaherty; book by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty; directed by Frank Galati.
•
Old Money
Written by Wendy Wasserstein; directed by Mark Brokaw.
See Theater listings for details.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

others in a pseudo–Edith Wharton's, and the two W's got more and more into each other's hair. An offstage character, a dead sister, also thickened the brew; finally, the cross-references became a Gordian knot.

As funny one-liners, but more often vatic profundities (really just one-liners with a halo around them), were batted about, a further magma of Significance shrouded the proceedings. This was Writing Big, whereas our author is best writing small, where a spade remains a spade. After a while, I just sat there admiring Thomas Lynch's tastefully opulent set, Jane Greenwood's parade of costumes from grand to Gap, and Mark McCullough's lighting burnishing all.

Old songs were sung and danced to ad nauseam, and Mark Brokaw directed the whirligig with sweep and zest. But it was impossible to say whether these excogitated phantasms should be played thus or otherwise, and whether the ultimate meaning was how things change or how they don't. And it was even less possible to care.

IT IS HARD TO SAY WHETHER ROBERT WILSON is a clever charlatan or an ingenuous idiot; whichever he is, he excels at it. His production of Strindberg's **A Dream Play** for Stockholm's Stadsteater (not to be confused with the Royal Dramaten) came to BAM, which seems to specialize in importing the importunate.

Here is the formula for making it in today's theater. You begin with a couple of splashy outrages that create a *succès de scandale,* and get the sensation hunters, the phonies, and the sheep—a goodly part of the audience—salivating about you. Thereupon sundry theaters, including many foreign ones, open their arms, and reviewers, as bamboozlable as the masses from which they arose, become your shills. Endowments and awards are showered upon you, and you start your own theater or school, or both.

Presently the institutions of higher learning prostrate themselves before you, and you ride in triumph through Academia. Thereafter no theater, opera house, or museum (see Wilson's staging of the Armani show at the Guggenheim) can forgo your services, and you are crowned emperor of a realm whose very children are brainwashed into blindness to imperial nudity. The world of the arts is now not so much your oyster as your pissoir.

Wilson has decimated, deconstructed, and destroyed *A Dream Play,* submerging it in his private, masturbatory images, either irrelevant to or contradicting the text. It is three hours of obscene obfuscation, and I could hardly wait for the intermission, when I—like many others, including some critics—could escape. There remains only for Wilson to figure out how to cut up the world's great paintings and turn them into Wilson collages.

THERE IS SOMETHING TOUCHING ABOUT A man well into his eighties who keeps writing plays, but rather less so if he keeps writing the same one. The subject is always an eccentric Texan or Texas family, and an interminable roster of who was whose great-aunt, grandmother-in-law, or second cousin by marriage, and who died before whom. Horton Foote is a lovely man, but when writing, he becomes a memory-obsessed Horton the Elephant and puts his foot in it.

His latest, **The Last of the Thorntons**, though only 90 minutes, invites either sleep or parody. The dialogue goes like this: "I was living in West University in Houston, you know, with my sisters, and when they died . . . Gloria died first, you know, and then Rowena, and I was alone in that house in West University in Houston . . ." Or: "Frances Jane, she was the oldest, then Sister and Billy, named for his daddy, Mr. Ferguson." Or: "Do you all remember Punkin Armstrong? . . . Got drunk . . . and yelled, I'm a Croom Armstrong aristocrat! . . . She's dead. She died after my sister Gloria, but before my sister Rowena." To which someone replies, "My God, everybody I know is dead. My mama, my sister, Edith, my little brother." The theater becomes a necropolis.

Much of the talk concerns what became of Alberta's, the last of the Thorntons', duplex. Who bought it, or seized and sold it, to whom and for how much, and what was its real worth, and how much of it Alberta got or was cheated out of. Alberta (played by Horton's daughter, Hallie) is now prematurely in an old folks' home, affected by others with senile dementia.

Miss Foote is the most monotonous of actresses, especially when she portrays someone deranged. Her voice has as much variety as a ratchet wheel, and her expression is easily as glazed over as ours a few minutes into *The Last of the Thorntons.* If this play isn't the last of the Hortons, we'll all end up, dead of boredom, in Mr. Foote's elephant graveyard, a long litany of names and a matter of who predeceased whom. ■

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During Daniel Barenboim's residency as recitalist and conductor, the music sometimes suffered, as if the only goal were to get through all those notes.

CARNEGIE HALL BILLED IT AS **Perspectives: Daniel Barenboim**, but "Blitz: Daniel Barenboim" might have been a more accurate description. This two-season extravaganza has already presented the musician of the moment as conductor, pianist, accompanist, duo-recitalist, chamber musician, lecturer, and eager courter of the press. Right now, he is presiding over the grand finale, leading the Staatskapelle Berlin in a complete cycle of the Beethoven symphonies and five piano concertos, with the maestro at the keyboard. The only missing ingredient in this bulging showcase is opera—Barenboim is also a busy opera conductor in Europe—but apparently the Metropolitan couldn't be persuaded to work any dates into its schedule. Even without that, this factotum's activities in New York over the past year make our notorious workaholic, James Levine, look positively lazy.

Barenboim is certainly a prodigious musical talent, and he has achieved a high level of excellence in every performing capacity he has cared to cultivate. Even so, I occasionally had to pause during this marathon and wonder if it wasn't driven more by industry than inspiration. Just before launching his Beethoven cycle, Barenboim gave a solo piano recital that was far from enjoyable. The program could not have been more appetizing or thoughtfully conceived: Liszt's three *Petrarch* Sonnets and his *Dante* Sonata, followed by the first two books of *Iberia* by Albéniz, a composer much influenced by Liszt. This is music that demands virtuoso treatment, and despite some note-grabbing in the sonata, Barenboim, at 58, still devours the keyboard with the greedy appetite of a precocious teenager. Yet it all sounded harsh, glaring, in-your-face, and often downright ugly. The lofty expressive element that inhabits even Liszt's most flamboyant scores was never suggested, while Albéniz's loveliest and most intricate passagework seemed relentlessly grim.

The evening before his recital, Barenboim shared the stage with Radu Lupu in an evening of four-hand piano duets by Schubert. This glorious music is notoriously difficult to balance. Even with the pianists exercising every care to keep the textures clear and properly proportioned, the effect, at least from where I sat, was still frequently cloudy and inarticulate. Worse, I didn't feel I was in the presence of compatible temperaments. Lupu is a more restrained and introspective player than his partner, and is ideally suited to explore the lyrical qualities of these pieces as well as their depth and scope. He does precisely that on a Sony recording of the F-minor Fantasie with Murray Perahia, a kindred spirit, and I recommend it as an antidote. In Carnegie Hall the blend neither mixed nor matched.

Mismatched: Barenboim, left, with Radu Lupu at Carnegie Hall.

Daniel Barenboim
At Carnegie Hall.
See "In Concert" listings for details.

•

I Cavalieri di Ekebú
Opera by Riccardo Zandonai, presented by Teatro Grattacielo at Alice Tully Hall; conducted by Robert Ashens, with the Oratorio Society of New York.

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, it's been okay to sneer at an opera by any early-twentieth-century Italian composer not named Puccini. Come to think of it, not so long ago even Puccini was trashed by superior people, who considered his contemporaries decadent, shabby frauds beneath contempt. Since the picture is unlikely to change anytime soon, it takes real courage for an organization like Teatro Grattacielo to specialize in this despised corner of the repertory. Over the past few seasons, the company has given concert performances of operas by such unfashionable composers as Mascagni, Montemezzi, and Cilea, with works by Giordano, Respighi, and Wolf-Ferrari promised in the future. The group's latest offering, last month at Alice Tully Hall, was even more esoteric: Riccardo Zandonai's **I Cavalieri di Ekebú**, first seen at La Scala in 1925 with no less than Arturo Toscanini conducting and never before performed in North America.

Zandonai has not entirely vanished from sight. The Metropolitan gave a lovely production of his most famous opera, *Francesca da Rimini*, in 1984, and his fragrant setting of the Romeo and Juliet tale also turns up from time to time. *I Cavalieri di Ekebú*, though, is perhaps his most ambitious piece, an operatic version of Selma Lagerlöf's Swedish novel of love and

Photograph by Chris Lee.

redemption that was also made into a famous silent film starring Greta Garbo. The plot tells how a charismatic preacher, defrocked and alcoholic, is redeemed by the love of a village girl and an old woman called La Comandante, whose iron forges at Ekeby Manor are run by knights she recruits from the distraught and destitute. It's not a story that sounds promising from a short synopsis, but it delivers the goods in all three genres—novel, film, and opera—thanks to its vibrant theatrical characters and an almost palpable sense of time and place.

Atmosphere, in fact, was always Zandonai's strong suit, and his compositional technique was fully up-to-date, drawing on Strauss for orchestral coloring and Debussy for harmonic flavoring: snowy northern landscapes, jolly Christmas revels, desolate country inns, and a raucous finale as La Comandante dies amid the clangor of her forges, anvils, and trip-hammers (the instrumental effects are consistently imaginative and beautifully scored). Zandonai may not have had Puccini's sophisticated melodic gift, but he was a master of declamatory arioso and he creates vivid character portraits with his vocal lines—Giosta's long Act I narrative describing his cursed past is an especially effective sequence. Like nearly all Italian operas of this period, though, *I Cavalieri di Ekebù* needs special treatment in order to work onstage: lavish scenery, a virtuoso orchestra, and—most important of all—powerhouse singing personalities committed to the idiom.

Unfortunately, the lusty vocal traditions that drove these operas are pretty much lost, and the tireless heroic tenors, gleaming dramatic sopranos, and full-throated mezzos Zandonai wrote for are also extinct. That said, Teatro Grattacielo's cast at least made a game stab at the piece. Gerard Powers (Giosta), Lori Phillips (Anna), and Mariana Paunova (La Comandante) may have been vocally underpowered, but they showed a basic understanding of what the opera needs along with a willingness to take risks. The instrumental and choral music is also fiercely demanding—a challenge more efficiently met by the orchestra under Robert Ashens than the rather weak-voiced Oratorio Society of New York. No matter. The audience was clearly delighted to discover an important score from a neglected age, and for that Teatro Grattacielo deserves credit as well as encouragement to forge ahead. ■

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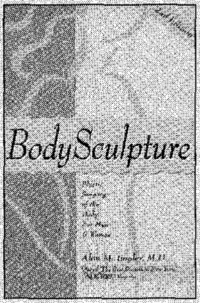

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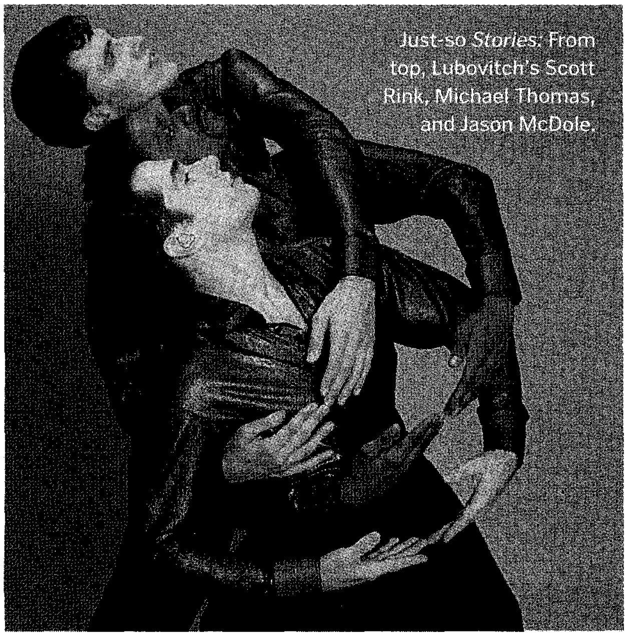
Men's Movement

A new Lar Lubovitch work brings out the vivid best in his dancers; Doug Varone is upstaged by an offbeat setting; Eiko & Koma retread familiar turf.

A SCHEDULE AS TIGHT AS A traffic jam required me to see **Lar Lubovitch**'s new *Men's Stories* in preview, a day before its official opening. As the company requested, I'm noting this here, but I don't see how another 24 hours could have made the dancing any better. It was well-nigh perfect—lusty and elegant. Mastering Lubovitch's lush mix of classical and modern dance, the nine male performers worked seamlessly in the choreographer's fluid ensembles without sacrificing the fierce singularity that made Lubovitch choose each of them to begin with. In the group work and the many brief solos that stud the piece, Gerald Casel and Michael Thomas were particularly notable, the first for his creaturely quality, the second for his suggestion of the passion and madness lurking in every human soul.

The choreography, though pleasing, was less successful than the vivid performances. As Lubovitch explained in recent interviews, he was attempting to create a piece that displayed the individuality of its dancers, whose temperament and history would be conveyed by the way in which each executed his material. While it's true that body language invariably reveals character—indeed, that anatomy itself often proves to be destiny—it's impossible to build an effective dance solely on this phenomenon. Whatever tales may be inferred from *Men's Stories*, they have no specific narrative and no compelling drama—not even any definite characterizations. What does come across is a composite account of dignity won and maintained despite the toll life constantly exacts. The men in the piece are cavaliers (and suavely costumed as such by Ann Hould-Ward). The choreography suggests that they have overcome adversity imposed from outside and their own inner conflicts, electing to comport themselves as men who are free and strong—emblems of what a human being can be. Of course, both classical ballet and traditional modern dance aim for this ideal, so with masterly dancers like the ones he assembled, Lubovitch was halfway to his goal the moment he brought them together.


Just-so *Stories:* From top, Lubovitch's Scott Rink, Michael Thomas, and Jason McDole.

Lar Lubovitch
At the Orensanz Center for the Arts.
•
Doug Varone
At the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.
•
Eiko & Koma
At the Harvey Theater at BAM.

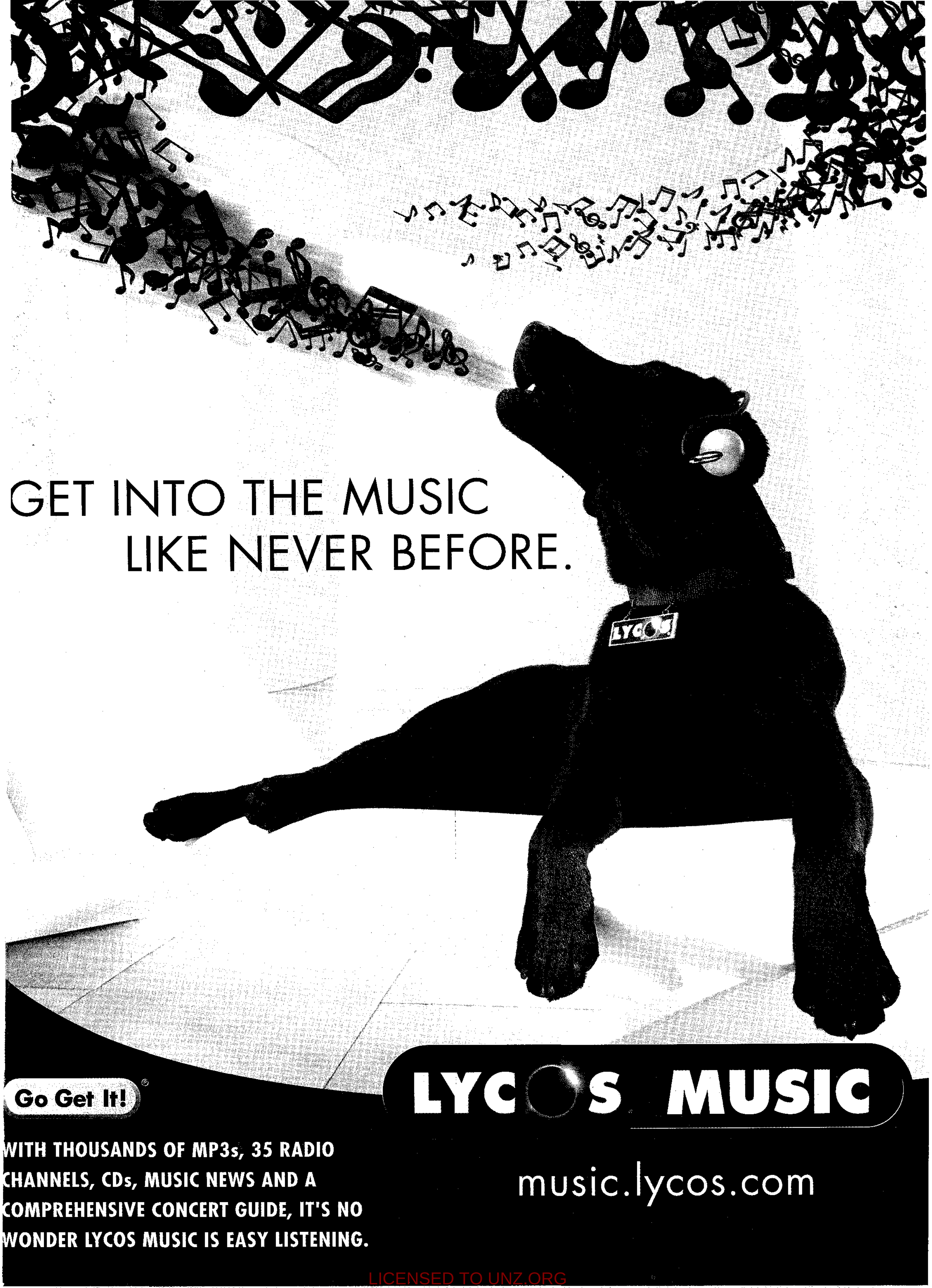
LUBOVITCH'S *MEN'S STORIES* was performed at the Orensanz Center for the Arts, a former synagogue whose decaying neo-Gothic altar, heady proof of the poetry of ruins, supplied the dance with an evocative architectural backdrop. Lower Manhattan, first home of successive waves of American immigrants, is rich in such venues, redolent of social history. **Doug Varone** chose another of them—the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, a dilapidated warren of claustrophobic apartments, as the setting for an experimental semi-interactive piece, *Neither.*

An audience of about twenty is led into the tenement and shunted from room to room in the wake of a cluster of dancer-actors who play out a peripatetic mini-melodrama. Its subject, a frequent one of Varone's, is the intimate communal relationships that provide a full measure of terror along with the tenderness the human animal so desperately craves. *Neither* presents two small societies operating in tandem: a tradition-bound immigrant family with a renegade daughter and a dance company with a dictatorial director. Varone plots his dual drama feebly, succumbing to dialogue that's embarrassingly trite. Apart from two duets in gesture for Merceditas Manago (Mom) and the always distinguished Larry Hahn (Pop), the acting is mediocre. The movement, the element that might have salvaged the piece, is simply insufficient.

The viewers are much put upon. Given some freedom to roam around the action, they're denied the security of a fixed vantage point. Thus disoriented, they also find themselves dangerously in the way, buffeted by the force and frenzy of the performers in the constricted space. To cap their discomfort, they're intermittently coerced into becoming part of the show.

The real star of this project was the disintegrating tenement—the suffocating close quarters forbidding privacy; the naked ceiling lights creating shafts of glare in unnervingly unplumbed darkness; the touching remnants of attempts at decoration serving as poignant ironies in a shelter that—even before the paint peeled off in

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.



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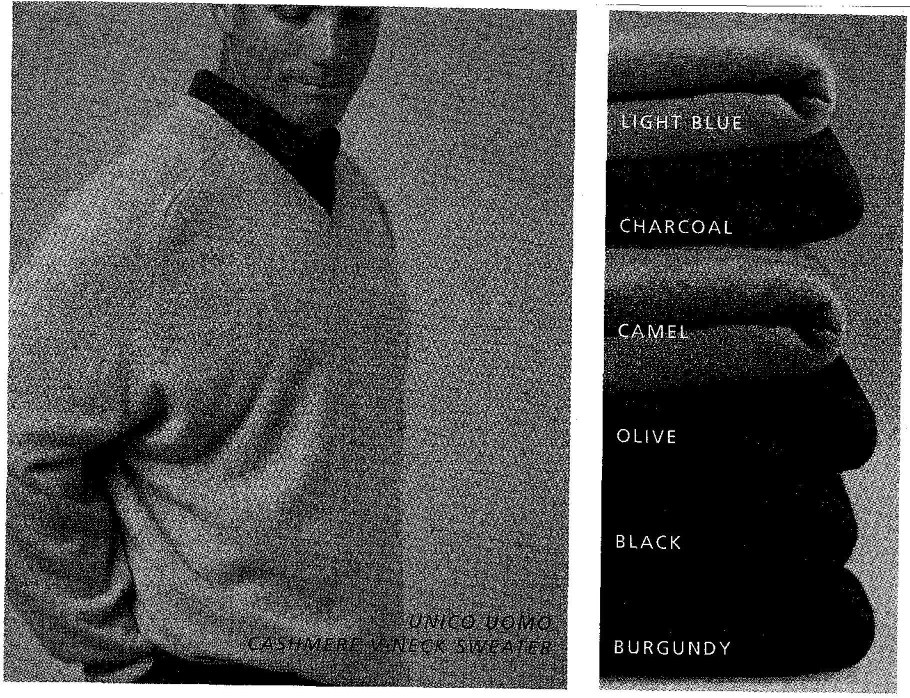
sheets and the doors began to fall from their hinges—allowed its inhabitants nothing more than the bare necessities. The place seemed to be haunted by past lives far more complex and compelling than Varone was able to evoke.

TYPICALLY, **Eiko & Koma** BUILT THEIR OWN environment for their latest work, installing it on the stage of BAM's Harvey Theater, like a spaceship from aeons past landed by whim or dire intent on contemporary urban turf. The construction, originally designed for an environmental piece, is a mobile caravan holding a rough, gleaming rock formation that incorporates a hill-slope perch, a nest or cradle overhung with filigreed plant life that trembles in a breeze from an unseen source, and a sealed-off hollow that suggests a cave or womb. Bearing its two often barely distinguishable inhabitants, bathed in Scott Poitras's now silvery, now golden, now fiery light, this eerie terrain advances, recedes, and rotates at a pace so slow as to be nearly imperceptible. The pace of the performers' movement is similarly protracted, yet for the viewer with infinite patience, the proceedings can be riveting because of Eiko & Koma's absorption in their narrow, intense vision and the fascinating grotesqueness of their postures and gestures.

If this piece can be said to convey a story, it is the one the Japanese-bred husband-and-wife team have been telling us for a quarter-century now: Male and female primordial beings meet, mate (seemingly overcoming every obstacle harsh nature might devise), fall away, and then segue into a new cycle that repeats life's implacable process of a brief kindling, followed by death and subsequent renewal through metamorphosis. To my eyes, the choreographers add no new information or commentary on their perennial theme with *When Nights Were Dark*. The piece is most distinguished for Joseph Jennings's score—evocative humming and crooning for an a cappella choir that Eiko has aptly called "the very breathing of landscape"—and for being visually ravishing. During its longueurs, I thought a lot about the fact that the set's geologic and botanical features had been fashioned from rags that Eiko & Koma had hand-painted themselves, adding twigs and pieces of driftwood, and that the caravan is moved manually, not mechanically. You don't need to know this to understand what they're doing, but it helps. ■



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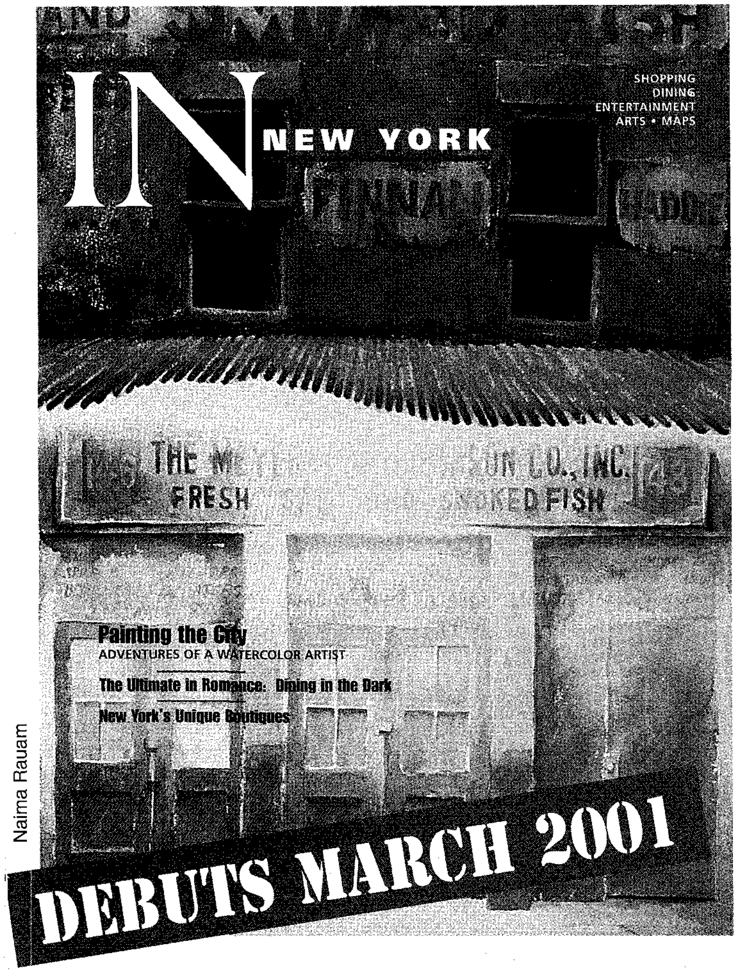

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Photo: Kenneth Chen

Sea Change

Bayard's isn't just fitted out like a high-end yacht; with recently arrived chef Eberhard Müller at the helm, the cuisine ebbs and flows like the tide.

ALAN KING AND MYRON Cohen used to joke about appearing on them. Woody Allen cringes at the sight of one. And I can't recall any of Philip Roth's protagonists ever owning any. In short, Jews don't normally do boats. No, not boats as in Holland America Line's fleet of titanic pleasure crafts, complete with ice rink, squash courts, and more skirted buffet tables than there are change-of-life blondes up in the disco. I mean boats with jibs and masts and lots of big knots, where you can feel the roll of each wave and no one on deck has to be told which is the starboard side.

Is it any wonder, then, that after a tour of India House, home of Bayard's, with its extensive and enviable collection of nineteenth-century ship models, prints, paintings, captain's wheels, figureheads, and seafaring memorabilia, I sit at my table like a Moonie at High Mass. What am I doing here without brass buttons, let alone a blazer? The husband of my lunch partner comes from a family that actually helped found the private club that dines here at midday—and I bet all *his* shirts are monogrammed. Naturally, she relaxes into her barrel chair as if it were a velvet chaise. I'm still all shoulders-on-ears over the state-house austerity of the place, like a set for a road company of *1776*. And yet, with its rugged, wide-planked floors, broad, grandly symmetrical mahogany staircase, elegant trappings, and oversize tables, the room is earnestly devoted to providing a diner with space and is peopled by a staff with effortless good manners. Perhaps I'm the one who's adrift here, after all, the one who needs to get my sea legs and look at Bayard's in a new light.

Bayard's
One Hanover Square
(212-514-9454). Dinner,
Mon.-Sat. 5:30-10 P.M.
Lunch is for club members
only; appetizers, $9 to $18,
entrées, $28 to $38. All
major credit cards.

Ship shapes: Bayard's dining room.

That light comes after sundown, when the dining room is open to the public. Then Bayard's takes on more drama, not only because the pale lemon walls reflect a delicately flattering sheen, but because Eberhard Müller, formerly of Lutèce, has taken over the kitchen. For while Luc Dendievel's original menu had several choices—like whole roasted foie gras, and root soup with truffles—that seemed completely at home in the solidly anchored room, too often his dishes were knocked off course by a surfeit of sweetness: apples, dates, passion fruit, figs. Dessert became redundant.

Müller's choices are less ornate, less feminine, and more daring. He leans toward dishes others have let us take for granted, as if to see if he can get us to sit up straight in those barrel chairs after all. That he often succeeds is remarkable, considering his inducements are such chestnuts as Dover sole and rack of lamb. Unfortunately, his kitchen is not as steady as the room. In fact, the erraticism is at times as startling as it would be if Metallica were brought in to play dinner music.

Buoyed one night by a first round of feisty tuna tartare spiked with toasted sesame seeds and mint, a warmly golden quail against a soft, faintly sweet bank of Savoy cabbage, chanterelles coated in a light hazelnut vinaigrette, and a hunk of foie gras so lush and meaty as to barely even require the grapes and greens alongside it, four of us sat there childishly giggling at our good fortune, willing—no, eager—to forsake great gossip and turn our attention to the bold dynamics of Müller's cooking. Steamed halibut followed, in a broth lavishly specked with tarragon, and all the more impressive for it. Snapper skin was tortilla-crisp on one side, and on the other moist and resting against a luxuriant ragoût of artichoke, carrot, and celery with a brash dash of saffron. The honey-mustard glaze on the rack of lamb was surprisingly balanced, never overpowering the heady flavor of the pink meat or competing with the rich pan juices fortified by root vegetables. The roast duck breast gleaming in a pool of brandied cherry juice made you wish it were a holiday. The poached-pear dessert in spiced wine was luscious (though the caramel ice cream was cloying and unnecessary). After all those false promises other places make when they keep you waiting twenty minutes for a soufflé, Bayard's high-hatted Grand Marnier confection can leave you teary-eyed with gratitude. And the champagne sorbet with apple crisps instigated the same rollicking good spirits that propelled Gigi when she discovered the powers of bubbly.

Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

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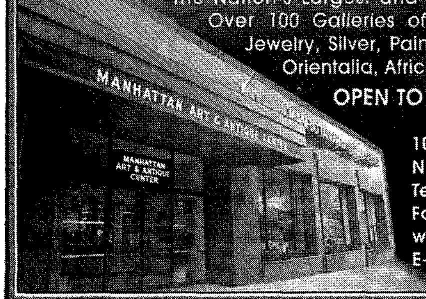

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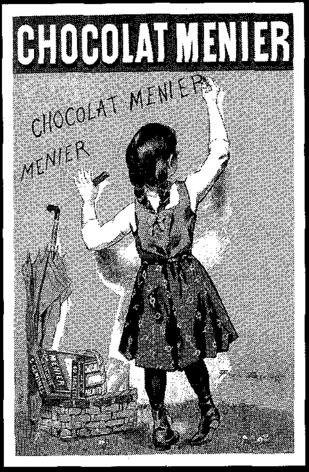

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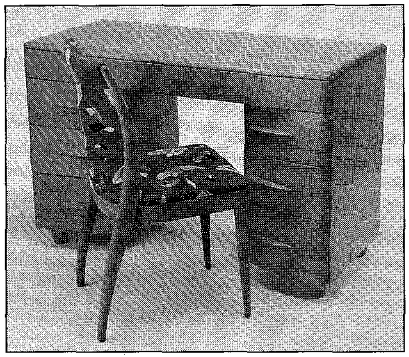

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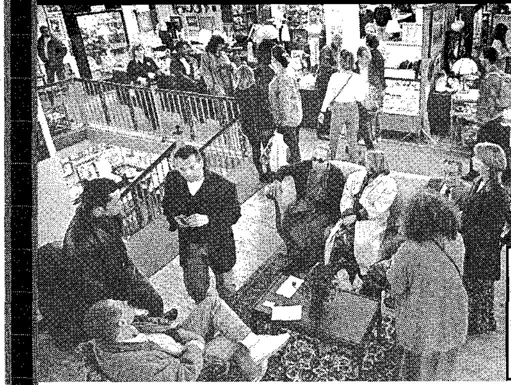

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John Leonard's TV Notes

Dying to Be Thin (12/12; 9 TO 10 P.M.; Channel 13) follows the public-television science series *Nova* into high schools, high fashion, the dance world, and the clinic to see what we know about anorexia nervosa, the incidence of which has increased in this country by 36 percent every five years since the 1950s, and what various therapies (hospitalization, psychiatric counseling, and antidepressants) do to stop 8 million Americans, most of them women between the ages of 15 and 24, from starving themselves to death. While an imbalance in the neurotransmitter serotonin is diagnosed, we should also be blaming our neurotic body culture.

The Stalking of Laurie Show (12/12; 9 to 11 P.M.; USA) is based on one of those true stories I'm sorry I ever heard about, with actors familiar only to regular watchers of such TV series as *Dawson's Creek* and *The Bold and the Beautiful*, about a teenage girl new to a high school in Amish country who is teased, then tormented, then raped, and finally stabbed by a pair of popular psychotics whose only excuse seems to be a sort of road rage at those bearded farmers in their horse-drawn buggies on the highway. It starts ugly and it gets worse.

A Diva's Christmas Carol (12/13; 9 to 11 P.M.; VH1) is a disco Dickens starring Vanessa Williams as Ebony (instead of Ebenezer Scrooge), a Diana Ross–like temper tantrum in taffeta, TLC's Chilli as Marli Jacob, who used to sing with her in a Supremes-like girl group but is very dead from drugs, Kathy Griffin as a wisecracking Ghost of Christmas Past, Duran Duran's John Taylor as the Ghost of Christmas Present, and—a genuinely witty touch—a VH1 *Behind the Music* mock episode on the late Ebony as the Ghost of Christmas Future, all showing up the night before a benefit concert intended to benefit only Ebony. No harm, no foul, nice Vanessa.

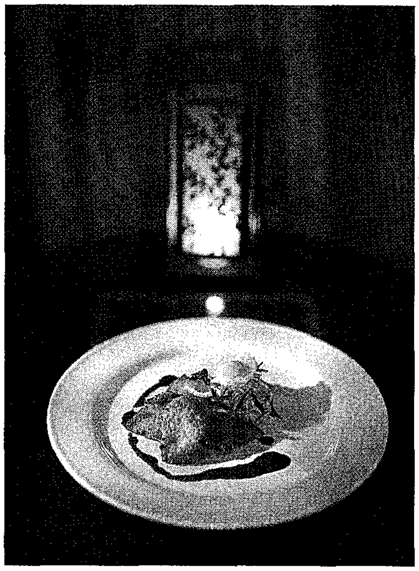
Three Miracles (12/15; 10:30 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13) is the first installment of *The Living Century* series, executive-produced by Barbra Streisand and Cis Corman, that talks at length with ordinary citizens who happen to have lived every day of the twentieth century; in this case, Rose Freedman, born in 1893 and still going strong in California, cooking, painting, learning Spanish, and watching Lakers games. She is also the last remaining survivor of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, the occasion of a wonderful poem by Robert Pinsky, which the former U.S. poet laureate reads to us on camera.

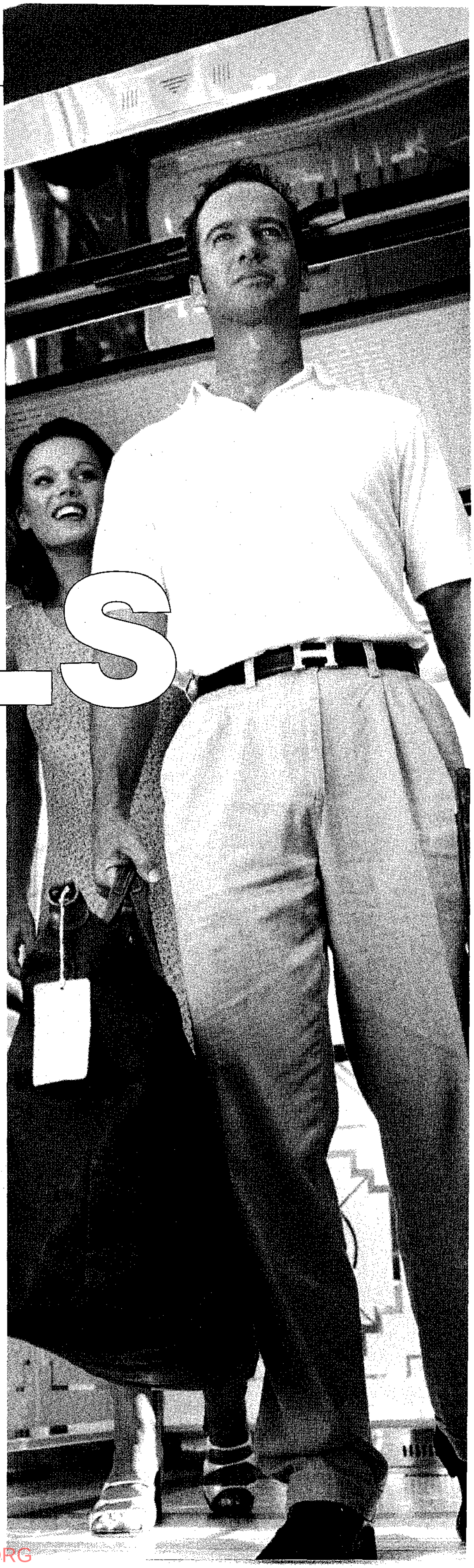
We stayed until they were just about ready to get out the vacuum cleaners. Ushering us downstairs, Peter Poulakakos, Bayard's gracious owner, said he hoped to see us soon. We couldn't get back fast enough. Who wouldn't want to return to Brigadoon? But somehow this paradise, too, seemed to vanish. The smoked codfish was so drenched in white-truffle oil that the arugula turned tame. Crab salad didn't have the citric flash it had greeted us with at lunch. Lentil soup tasted as if it had been thinned at the last minute: great flavor; no guts. The champagne sauce on the oysters tasted solely of salt.

In fact, salt was the dominant flavor in this next meal, stealing the tenderness of succulent short ribs, sacking the cherries on the now-overcooked duck breast. Veal medallions were obliterated by a cascade of caramelized but briny leeks. Dover sole, however, was lovingly unadorned save for clean lemon-butter sauce. But chicken breast found no savior in its chalky vegetable broth. Chocolate cake was warm, like the menu said. Unfortunately, only that much was true.

When we left Bayard's, I kept turning round and staring back at it, like the French Lieutenant's woman out at an empty harbor, unable to accept that my lovely memory had not returned. But then, sailors will tell you the water cares little for man's rhythms and wants. It will deliver what it wants when it wants. Thus, like the Lieutenant's Woman, I will continue to hope. I must go down to Bayard's again, and find that dreamboat of a meal once more. ■

Golden touch: Quail and Savoy cabbage.





NEW YORK HOTELS

NEW YORK is a visitor's paradise year round. Whatever the season, the list of places to go and things to do will always exceed the time you have. And as far as accommodations go, Manhattan is home to world-class hotels with the finest amenities. Midtown, uptown, East Side, and West Side, New York has a hotel to suit your style, your taste, and your price. Whether your plans are for business or pleasure, a romantic weekend or family holiday, winter is one of the city's most exciting seasons. The performing arts calendar is bursting with theater, dance, and music events. Shoppers will delight in the best sales of the year. Warm up your winter with a splendid stay at one of these unforgettable New York Hotels.

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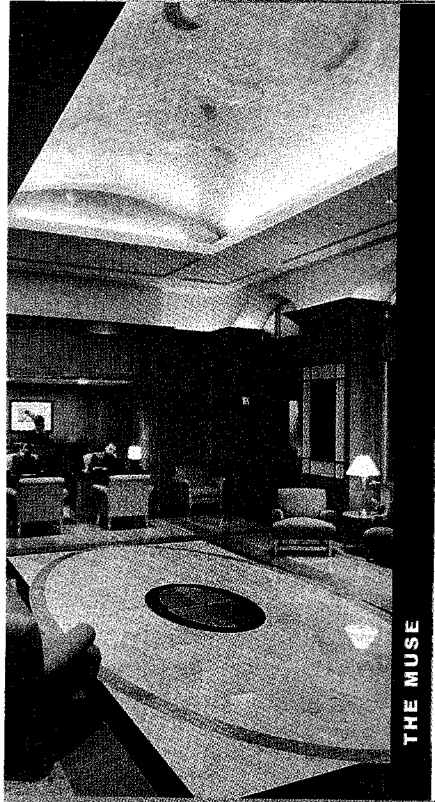

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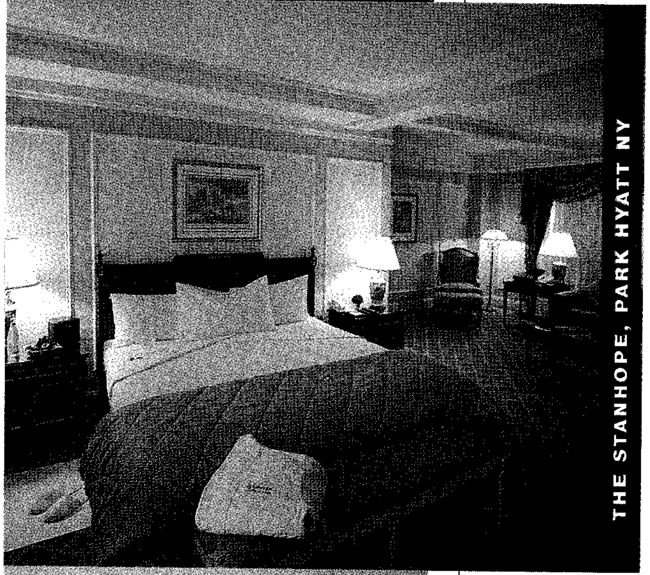

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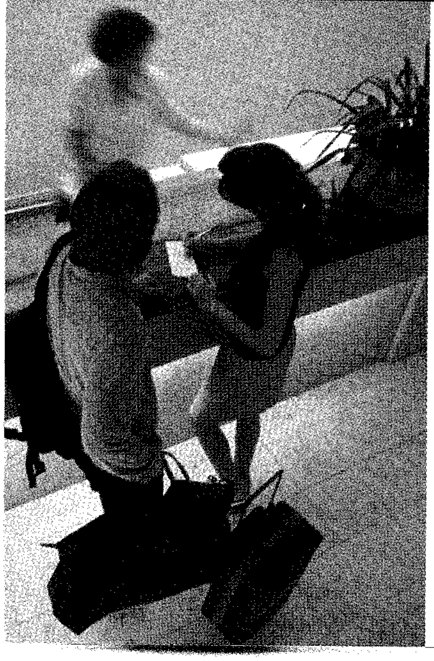

ARTISTIC INSPIRATION

Set just a block from the renewed Times Square, **The Muse**, a brand-new boutique hotel, is a sophisticated sanctuary from the busy midtown scene. Located in the heart of the theater district, the hotel's original name was inspired by the Muse, the nine daughters of Zeus who were the guardians of the fine arts including song, dance, and theater.

The Muse's special brand of "anticipatory service" is evident from the moment you step into the lobby. Instead of the usual check-in, hotel guests are invited to have a seat at the concierge desk. The same concierge manager will check you in, escort you to your room, and help you with any request—from restaurant reservations to theater tickets. At The Muse, all employees can take care of guests' needs.

The Muse has been designed with a contemporary feel, drawing upon influences of historic New York hotels. The dramatic lobby is topped with a 15-foot vaulted ceiling. A custom-patterned, marble and granite floor covers the lobby while white wool runners define the seating areas that are warmly furnished with comfortably overstuffed chairs and sofas. Upstairs, the hotel's 200 rooms are spacious retreats featuring the warm palette of rust, burgundy, light pear green, and muted blue-green found in the public areas. In-room amenities include European bed linens, featherbeds and duvets, comfy robes, toiletries by Philosophy, and Baudelaire soaps. Business travelers and vacationers will appreciate the convenience of spacious desks and high-speed Internet access.

District is the hotel's David Rockwell designed restaurant specializing in chef Sammy DeMarco's American cuisine with international accents. An intimate bar and lounge tucked at the back provides a comfortable hideaway for cocktails.

The Muse, 130 W. 46th St.,
between Sixth and Seventh avenues.,
485-2400; www.themusehotel.com

FIFTH AVENUE LUXE

For those seeking a coveted Fifth Avenue address, look no further. **The Stanhope, Park Hyatt New York**, is the Upper East Side's premier boutique hotel that combines old-world style with timeless elegance and state-of-the-art technology. In November, the hotel celebrated a new grand opening after enhancements to the public space.

Comfort and elegance describe the hotel's splendid décor. The Stanhope is patterned after luxurious European manor houses, with goldleaf molding and antiques displayed throughout the intimate public spaces. The 185 guest rooms are beautifully appointed and understated. The walls feature custom-designed pastel coverings that complement the antique reproduction furnishings accented with chinoiserie touches. Modern amenities include in-room faxes, two-line phones with dataport, and CD players.

Gracious dining is available at the hotel's Melrose restaurant specializing in contemporary American cuisine with Mediterranean flair. In the warm months, enjoy people watching outdoors at The Terrace at Melrose. The Lobby Bar and The Library are perfect for meeting and relaxing.

This season, The Stanhope offers guests some spectacular options. Make reservations for Christmas Day Dinner at Melrose. The prices are $72 per person or $36 for children under 12 (excluding tax and gratuities). On New Year's Eve, enjoy a deluxe room for two with a bottle of complimentary Champagne on arrival and complimentary breakfast for $375 plus tax. The New Year's Eve Dinner Dance package, available for $695 plus tax, includes a deluxe room for two, a five-course dinner with wine or Champagne and musical entertainment at Melrose, and a full American breakfast. In January and February, take advantage of The

Stanhope Museum Getaway. Stay in a deluxe room and receive two complimentary tickets to either The Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum for $285 plus tax.
The Stanhope, Park Hyatt New York
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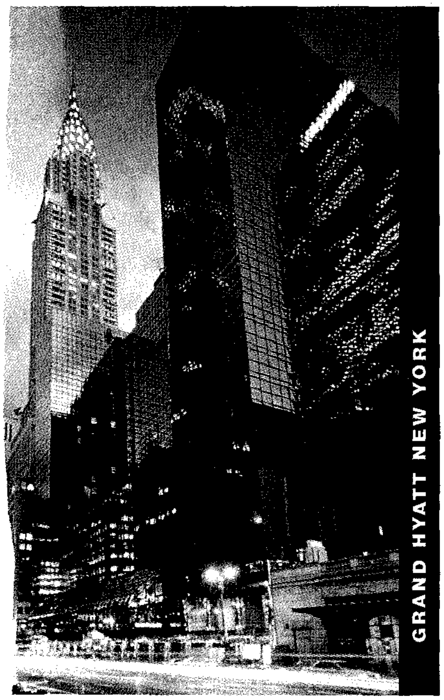
here's an unmistakable energy to the **Grand Hyatt New York**. The soaring marble lobby atrium with its cascading waterfall fountain hums with the same excitement that characterizes midtown Manhattan. Adjacent to the newly renovated Grand Central, just blocks from the United Nations, Fifth Avenue shops, major midtown corporations, and Broadway theater, the landmark Grand Hyatt New York is Manhattan's premier corporate business hotel and a terrific retreat for a midwinter break.

During the week, the Grand Hyatt's location and amenities make it perfect for business travelers. The Business Floor serves this important clientele with rooms that feature in-room faxes, 24-



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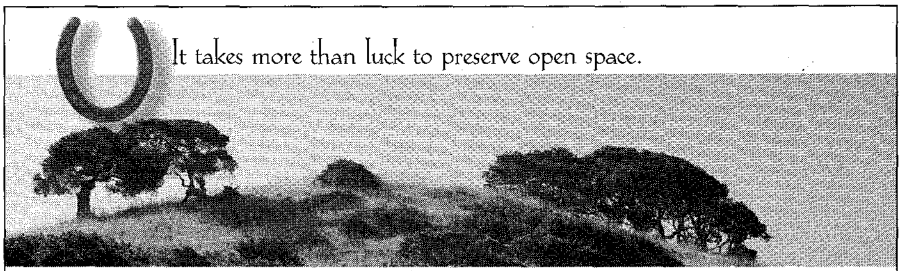

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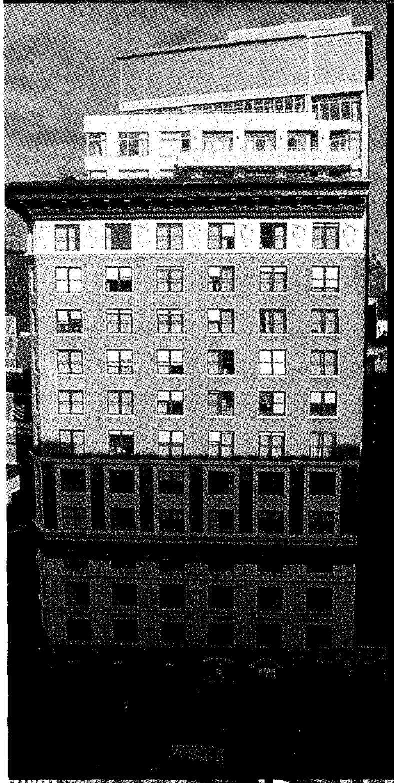

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The Grand Hyatt New York features three restaurants including the Crystal Fountain, the Sun Garden, and the recently opened, highly acclaimed Commodore Grill with a seasonally inspired menu focused on Eastern farms that produce gourmet cheese, prime meats, fresh seafood, and fresh produce.

This winter, the Grand Hyatt and Bloomingdale's have teamed up to make shopping extra fun. The Holiday on Sale package is available every night (except New Year's Eve) from December 17, 2000 through January 4, 2001. Stay over at the Grand Hyatt for just $169 and Bloomingdale's will give you a $15 electronic gift card for every $100 you spend and free package delivery to your hotel room. The Hyatt Touch Promotion is available every Friday and Saturday from January 1 through April 15, 2001. Enjoy a room rate of just $179 per night. Bloomingdale's will also provide you with a $15 electronic gift card for every $100 you spend, a personal shopper, and a free makeover.

Grand Hyatt New York, Park Avenue at Grand Central, 1-800-233-1234; www.newyork.hyatt.com

WEST SIDE REALM

If walls could talk, those belonging to the **Empire Hotel** would tell 100 years of tales. This West Side landmark has played host to many of the area's most exclusive social events and is the hotel of choice for many of Lincoln Center's performing artists.

The Empire Hotel combines old-world charm in the elegantly appointed lobby with classically designed guest rooms that feature such modern amenities as voicemail and two-line direct telephones with dataports.

Ideally situated opposite Lincoln Center and a short cab ride or stroll from Carnegie Hall and Broadway, the Empire Hotel is perfect for performing arts lovers. Before a performance or after, dine at the mezzanine level West 63rd Street Steakhouse. Or catch a set at the Iridium Jazz Club at street level.

As the gateway to the West Side, the Empire Hotel is the perfect launching point to the area's diverse shopping and world-class dining. Fitness enthusiasts can make good use of the New York Sports Club located close by.

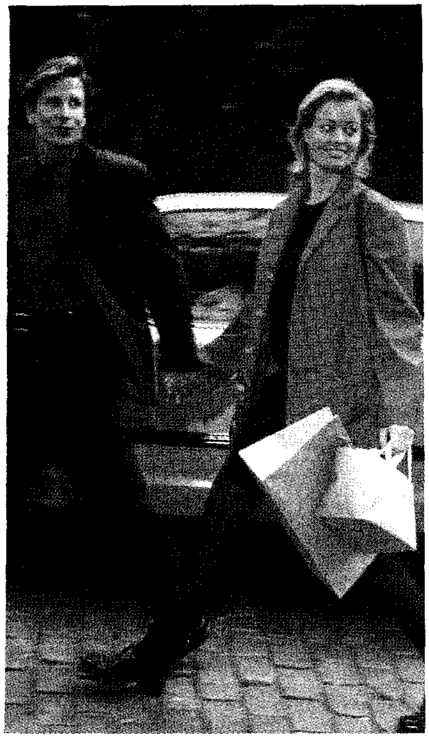
This winter enjoy the Empire Hotel for just $179 per night between January 2 and March 31, 2001.

Empire Hotel, 44 W. 63rd St., 265-7400; www.empirehotel.com

ISLAND CULTURE

As the weather gets colder, **On The Ave**'s Island Culture special heats up to help take the chill off the Big Apple. The hotel will provide free or reduced museum and concert tickets for guests staying during the winter months to promote the many great cultural activities and events that are easily accessible to guests. Just blocks from the American Museum of Natural History, with its new Rose Center for Earth and Science, Lincoln Center, Tavern on the Green, and countless boutiques, restaurants, and night spots that make this neighborhood unique, the hotel is in a prime location to enjoy all that New York has to offer.

Already noted for its stylish and spacious accommodations, On the Ave recently opened 23 newly constructed penthouse rooms and suites, each with a balcony and spectacular views of Central Park, the Hudson River, or the Manhattan skyline. Every room at On the Ave features



complimentary Gilcrest & Soames bath accessories, terry robes for guests, two phones with voicemail and dataport for Internet access, electronic key card locks, alarm clock radios, color cable television, an iron and hair dryer, and either a queen-or king-sized signature "floating" bed, to truly make guests feel like their sleeping on an island during their stay at this home away from home. Weekday guests receive a complimentary *The New York Times* in their rooms and guests can purchase reduced day passes at a nearby gym to help stay in their routines. On the Ave is also offering reduced winter rates.

On the Ave Hotel, 2178 Broadway at 77th Street, 1-800-509-7598; www.ontheave-nyc.com

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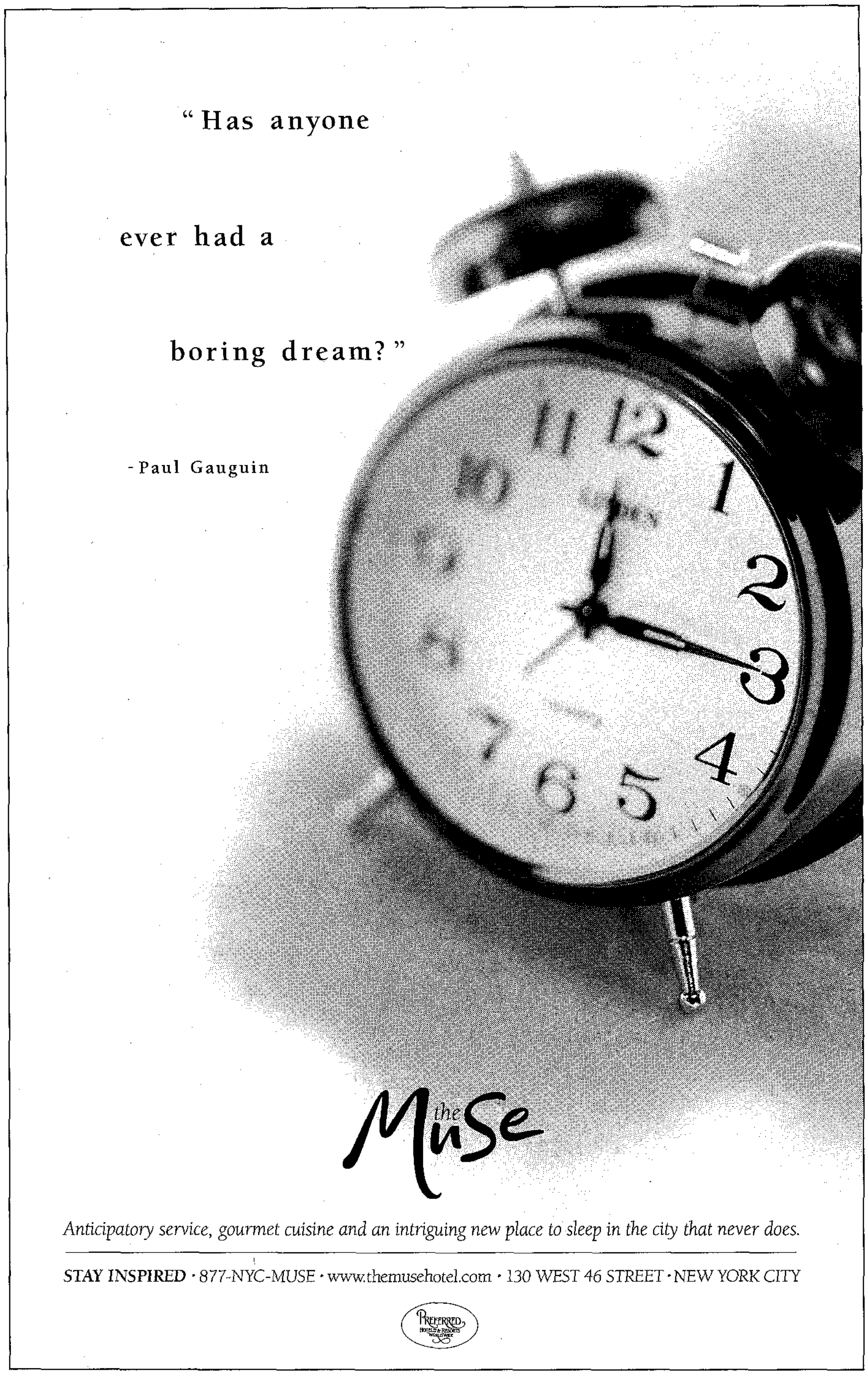
The Avalon is lower *midtown's traditional* European-style boutique hotel that suits both business and leisure travelers. Situated between Fifth and Madison Avenues, The Avalon is a short walk or cab ride from Madison Square Garden, the theater district, and bustling midtown Manhattan. The hotel's stylish décor



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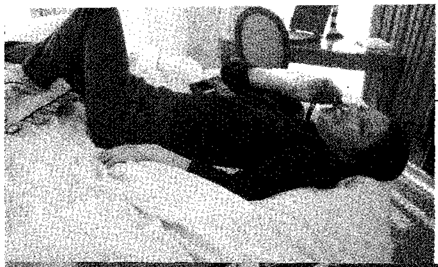

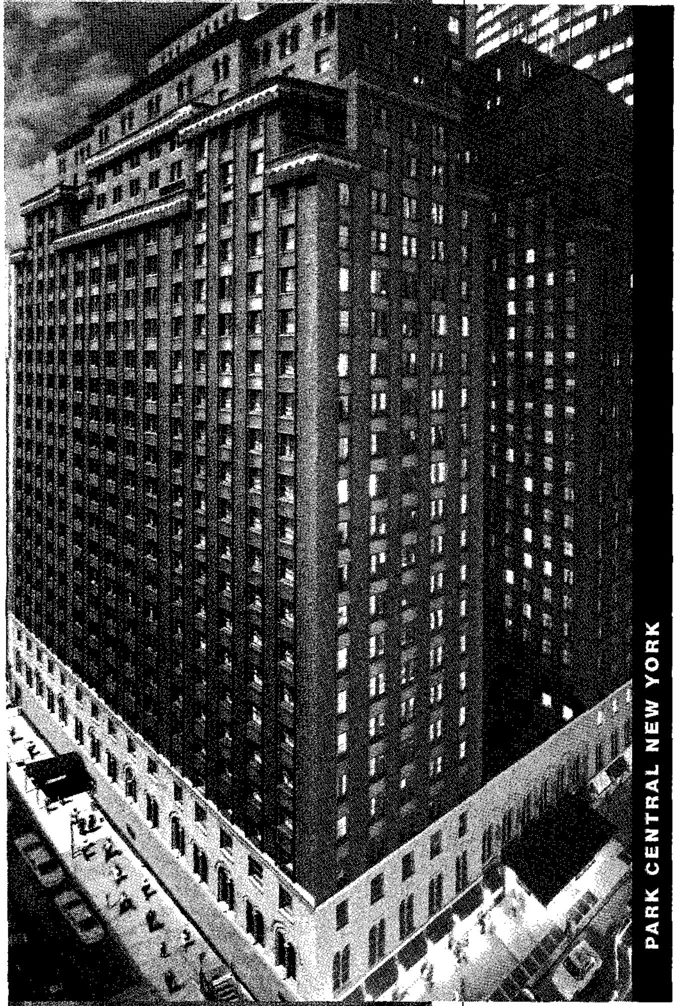

and exquisite service puts guests at ease the moment they step through the door.

The hotel's 100 guest rooms and suites are decorated in earth-tone palettes and feature state-of-the-art telecommunications systems including three two-line telephones with dataports, high-speed internet access, color cable TV with in-room interactive services and movies on demand. Bathrooms are embellished with imported Italian marble and include velour bathrobes and Irish cotton towels.

Just off the lobby is the elegant Avalon Bar & Grill where guests enjoy a complimentary breakfast of assorted breads and pastries, fruit, fresh juices, coffee, and tea. Lunch and dinner are served daily.

The Avalon's guests receive a complimentary glass of Champagne, complimentary morning newspaper, and complimentary access to Bally Total Fitness and Sports Club.

The Avalon, 16 E. 32 St.,
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The extensive renovation extends to all 900 rooms that are beautifully appointed in a contemporary style. Each Executive Level room and suite is specially equipped with a spacious desk, fax machine, coffee maker, and dual-line phone with laptop dataport. There is an on-premise Fitness Center. The Executive Level features an Executive Conference Room, and the incomparable views from the Executive Lounge on the 23rd floor.

Also on the premises is Manhattan's first and only time-share, the 175-suite Manhattan Club. Call 1-888-692-2121 for information.

Park Central New York,
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For business travelers on extended assignments in New York, families looking for new Manhattan homes, homeowners living through renovations, visitors who want to spend a month or more in the city, or individuals seeking medical treatment at New York's leading hospitals, these three stellar properties truly offer all the comforts of home along with the amenities of Manhattan's most gracious hotels. Each is located in a different Manhattan neighborhood.

To learn more about deluxe extended stay venues in New York, turn to pages 8a-11a, with features of The Phillips Club, the Envoy Club, and The Marmara-Manhattan.

WINTER LUXURY SALE

This winter, experience Manhattan's most select hotels and restaurants. **Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd.**, the premier organization representing 340 of the finest hotels the world over, has partnered with Relâis & Chateaux to create the Luxury Alliance. Thanks to the Luxury Alliance, the Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. announces the new Manhattan Winter Sale now enabling leading customers to benefit from preferred status of availablility at the following restaurants in Manhattan: Jean Georges, Auréole, and Daniel. From December 17, 2000 through April 1, 2001, these leading hotels are offering exceptional room rates and special amenities: Hotel Plaza Athénée, The Lowell, The Mark, The New York Palace, The Peninsula, and The Waldorf Towers. Call Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. to make reservations.

Mention the Manhattan Winter Sale and your hotel reservation number when you call.

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455 Madison Ave.
The Peninsula
700 Fifth Ave. at 55th Street
The Waldorf Towers
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RELÂIS & CHATEAUX RESTAURANTS:
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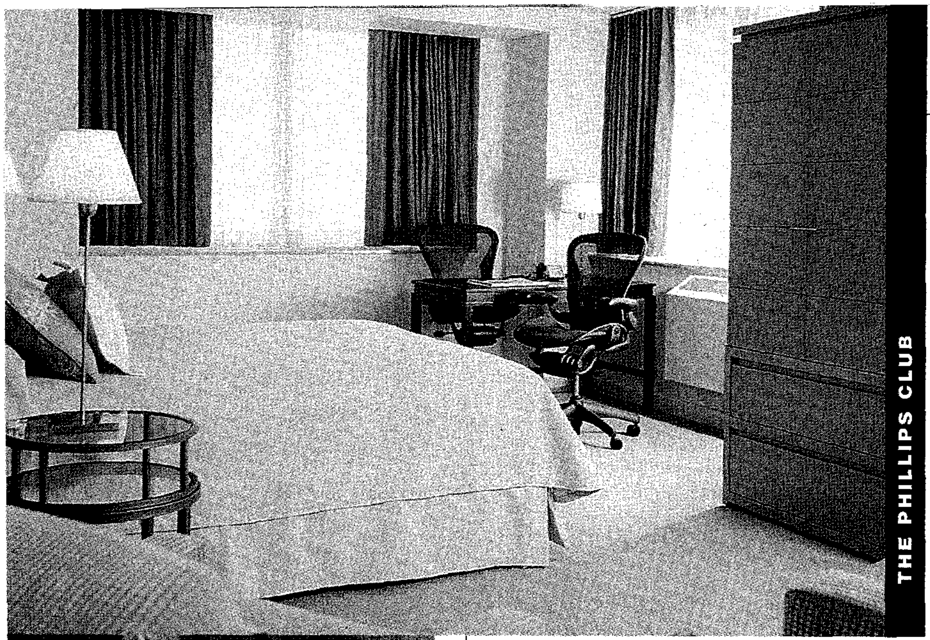

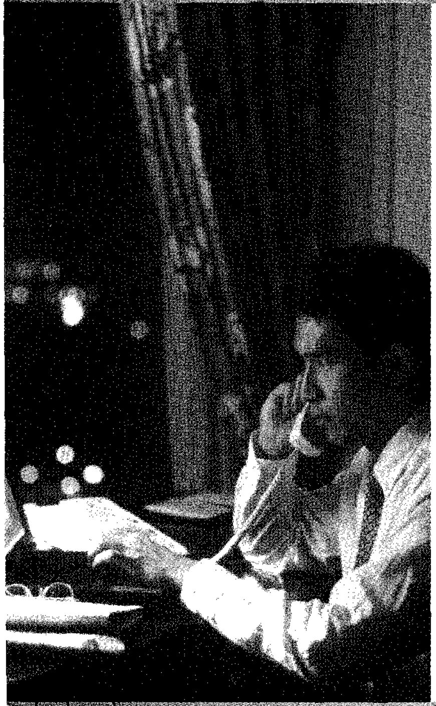

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Ideally situated in New York's superb Lincoln Square neighborhood, **The Phillips Club**, is a unique residential and hotel experience. Guests may stay overnight, for an extended period, or own an apartment via a Club Membership.

At The Phillips Club, personal service has been raised to an art form. Guests come to The Phillips Club to be recognized and pampered. It's no wonder then that 45 percent of guests are repeat visitors. The experience starts with a staff that knows each guest by name and extends to ensuring that guests can obtain anything they want.

Just steps from Central Park and Lincoln Center, The Phillips Club provides a soothing and stylish counterpoint to Manhattan's madness from the elegant, contemporary lobby to the gracious, spacious units that range in size from studios to three bedrooms. Each residence features a kitchen, but guests may order from room service provided by the onsite Balducci's. The staff will also grocery shop for guests.

Fitness buffs have privileges at Reebok Sports Club/NY. A 24-hour business center, an on-site boardroom, sophisticated telecommunications and security systems, a 24-hour concierge, dry cleaning and laundry, and in-room spa services round out the unparalleled amenities available at The Phillips Club.

The Phillips Club,
155 W. 66th St., between Broadway and Amsterdam avenues), 835-8800,
www.thephillipsclub.com

ENVOY CLUB

This stylish residential hotel in Murray Hill provides its guests with luxury living in apartments that epitomize contemporary chic. Full deluxe kitchens are complete with Royal Doulton china and Christofle flatware. Luxurious bathrooms are outfitted with Frette linens and Molton Brown body and bath products.

Personal services and special programs make the **Envoy Club** a one-of-kind establishment. Although all units come with kitchens, most guests do not want to cook, and eating out or ordering in can become tiresome. To meet the needs of their guests, The Envoy Club offers "Personally Yours," a personal chef service for guests who stay at least 30 days. One of three chefs will prepare meals right in the guest's kitchen according to their wishes. The chef can prepare multiple meals to last several days or the chef can come daily.

The Envoy Club's NYCHIC Program introduces its guests to fashionable New York. As most guests stay at least one month, NYCHIC is a terrific way to learn and explore the hip side of Manhattan life. The package includes certificates for a facial and manicure at Bliss spa, a martini at Whiskey Blue bar, lunch for two at the café in the hip new DKNY Madison Avenue store, a $100 certificate to ABC Carpet & Home, day passes for two at

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There's nothing worse than arriving in a foreign destination at 6 a.m. on a Sunday and realizing you can't obtain the local currency for another 24 hours. **Chase Currency to Go** has made this an experience of the past. Next time your plans call for foreign travel, simply log onto Chase's currency-to-go.com to order any one of over 75 foreign currencies, foreign travelers cheques, or U.S. dollar travelers cheques. Whether you are a Chase customer or not, you can order via the Web site or by dialing 1-888-Chase84 seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

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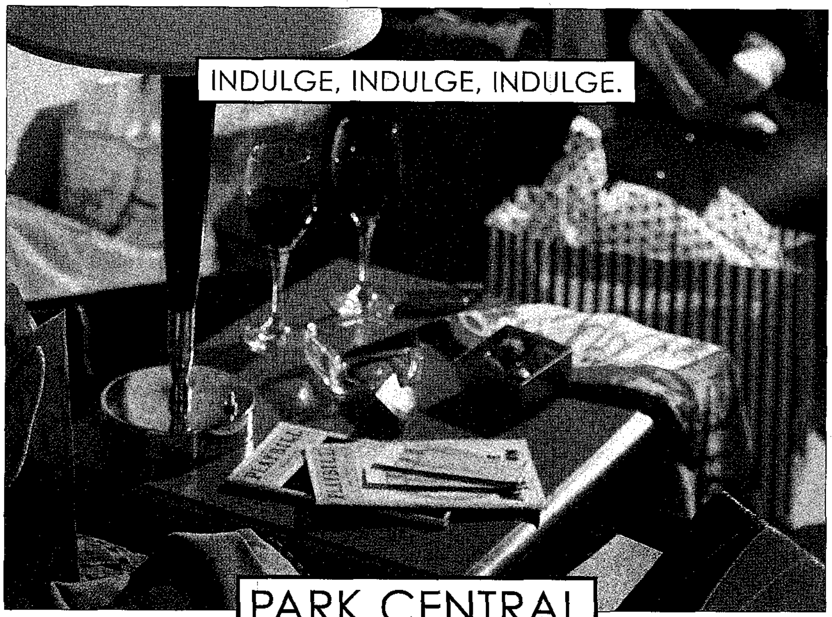
little brown bag



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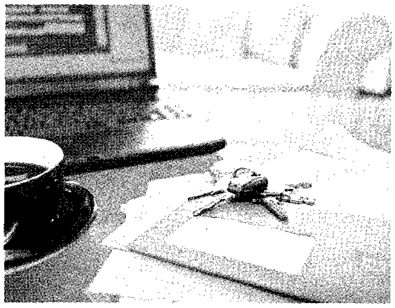
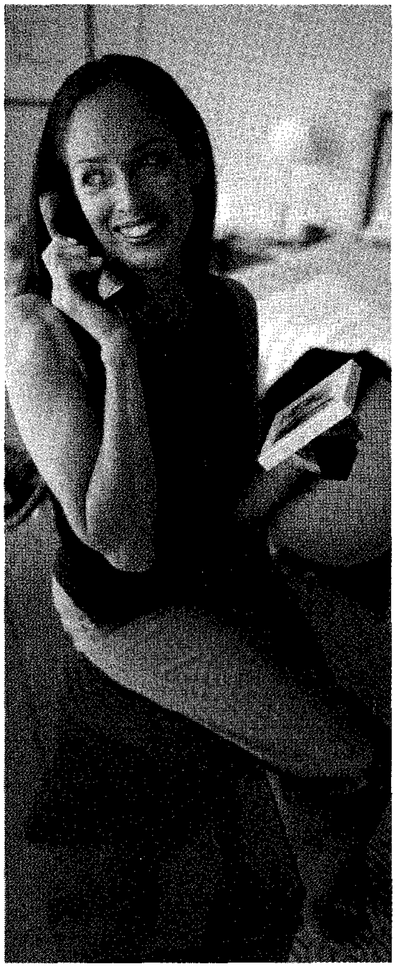
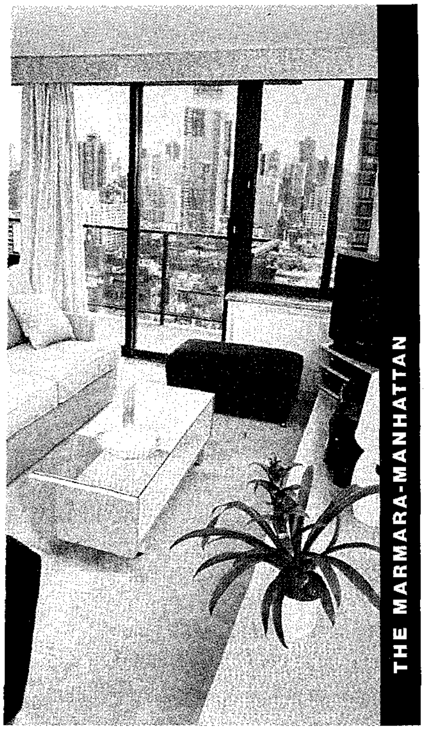


the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and a box of Krispy Kreme donuts. The package is complimentary with the rental of a one or two bedroom suite through April 2001.

Designed to help separated or divorced partners cope with the stress of leaving their homes, Envoy Club offers the Suddenly Single Program which includes such amenities as an aromatherapy candle, a selection of soothing herbal infusions, and the recent bestseller, *The New Creative Divorce* by Dr. Mel Krantzler and Pat Krantzler. The Envoy Club will provide





these guests with a list of the top 10 divorce attorneys and a list of recommended therapists.

Envoy Club, 377 E. 33rd St.
corner of First Avenue, 402-1000;
www.envoyclub.com

THE MARMARA-MANHATTAN

or stays of a month or longer, the upper East side choice for quiet sophistication is **The Marmara-Manhattan**. Close to world-class museums, exclusive shopping, and fine restaurants, The Marmara is also perfect for families who want to be near local private schools and parks.

This elegant, modern high-rise features fully furnished luxury apartments that range in size from studios to three bedrooms, most with balconies and wrap-around views. Residential in feel, The Marmara treats guests to hotel services that include a concierge, 24-hour doorman, valet/laundry services, and daily housekeeping.

There is an exercise center on the premises and guests are also provided with complimentary passes to the nearby 92nd Street Y's state-of-the-art fitness and pool facilities.

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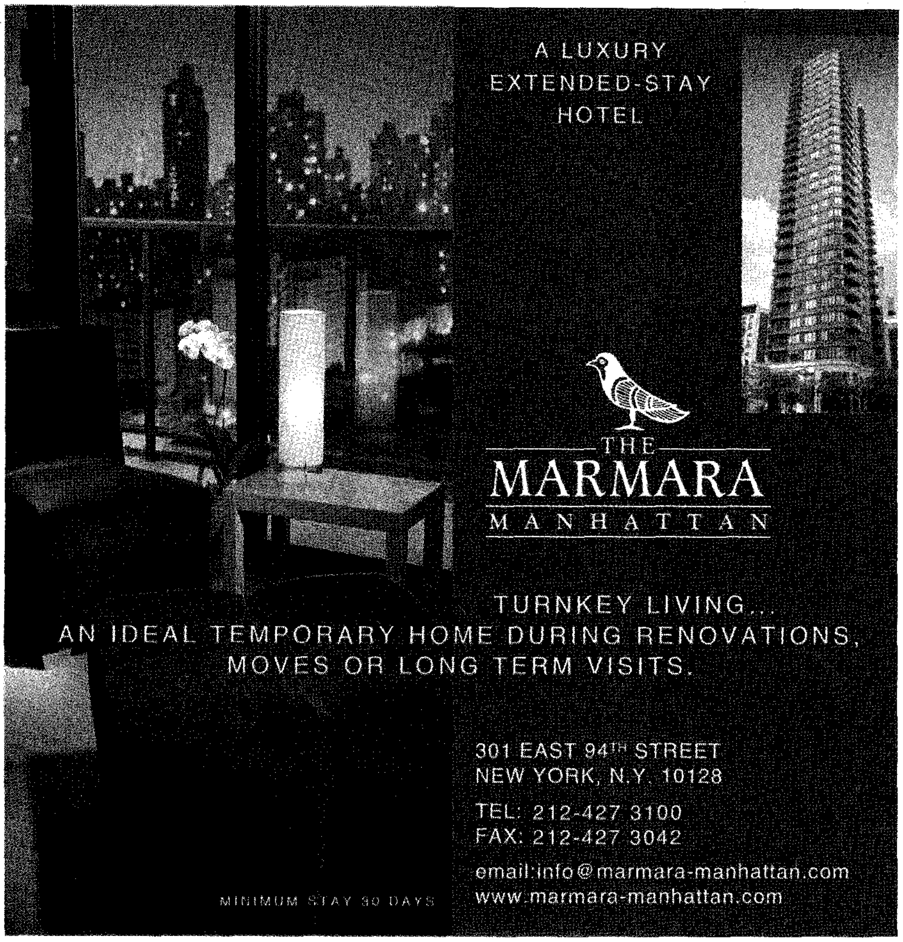
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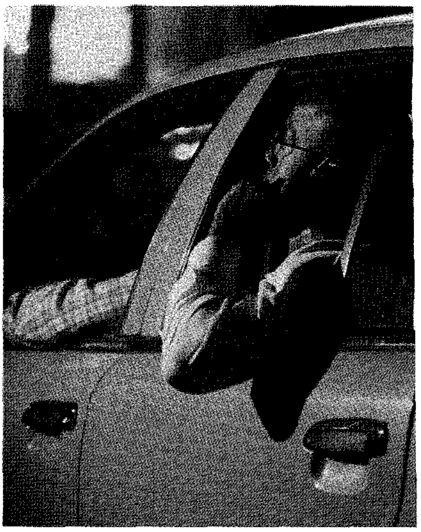
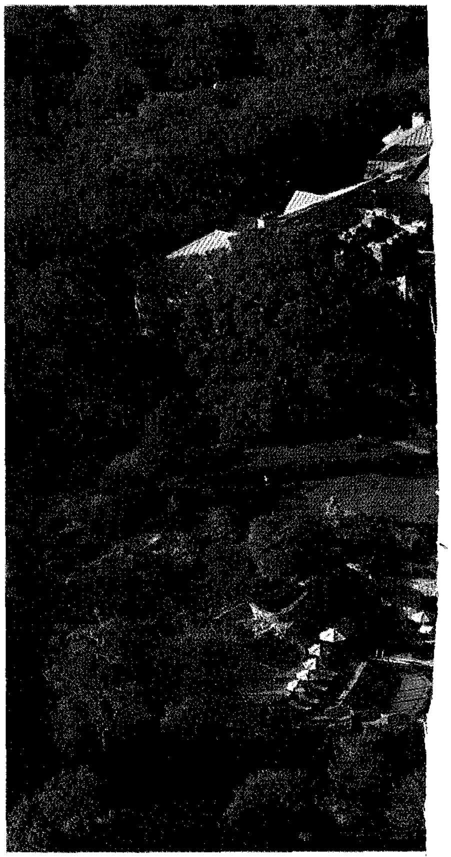


newly renovated Roof Club, an indoor/outdoor facility featuring a private lounge and wrap around outdoor terrace. The lobby is now home to The Gallery at The Marmara-Manhattan, a glass-enclosed space displaying work by local and international artists with new exhibits every three months.

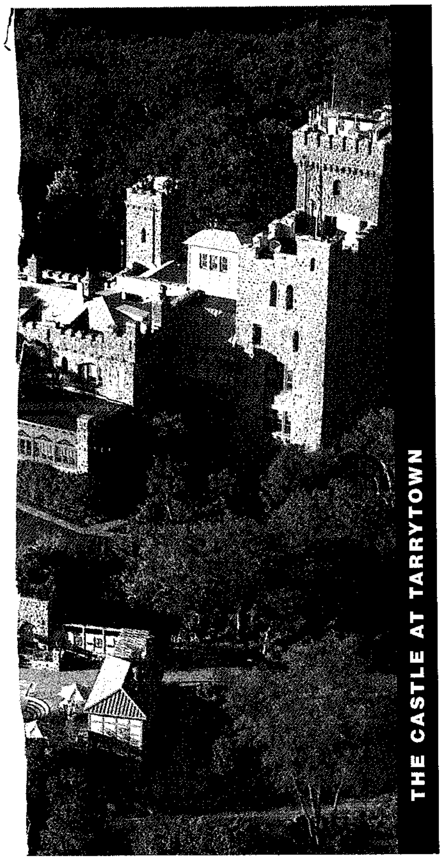
The Marmara-Manhattan,
301 E. 94th St., 427-3100;
www.marmara-manhattan.com

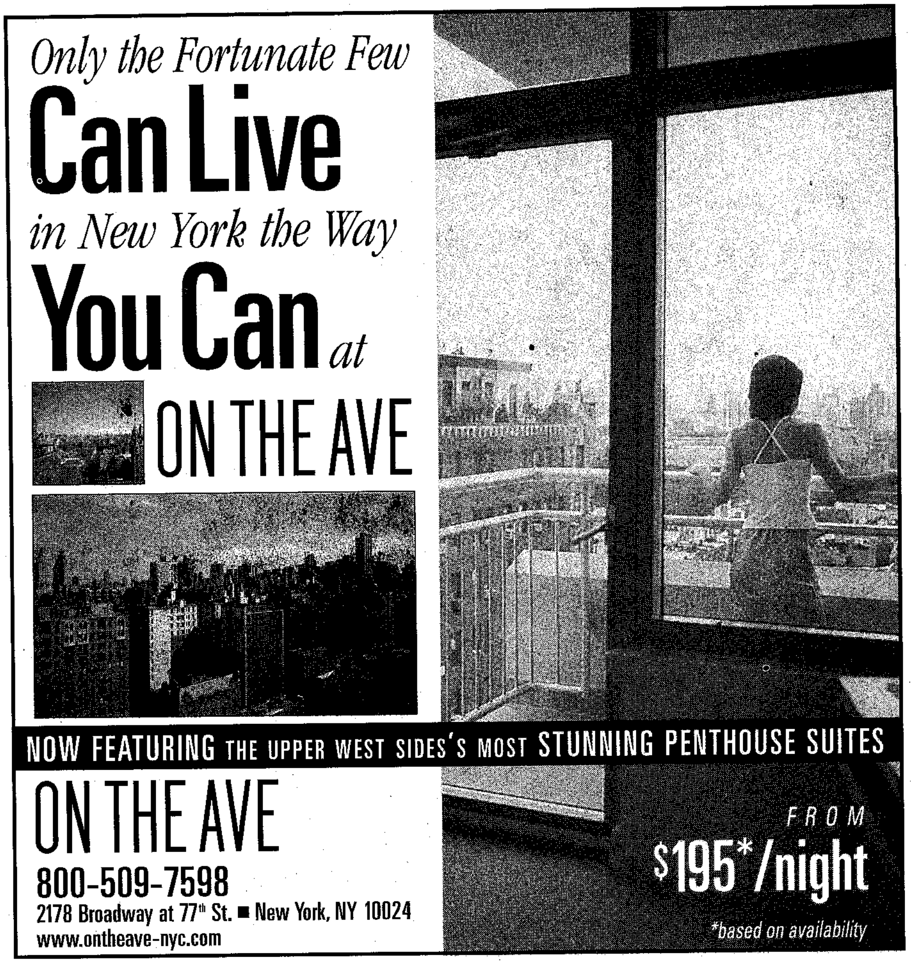


THE CASTLE AT TARRYTOWN

A roaring fire, beautifully dressed guests, exquisite food and wines, and dancing in a setting of old-world splendor. This is the perfect backdrop for a one-of-a-kind New Year's getaway that's only 35 minutes from NYC by car or train. Enjoy two nights at The Castle at Tarrytown, a Relais & Châteaux small luxury hotel, a Black Tie Gala with five-course menu and dancing, Sunday breakfast, and Monday brunch. Another option: Opt for the Black Tie Gala only, beginning with cocktails at 7:30 p.m. Or, enjoy an early three-course dinner at 5:30 p.m. and get back home in plenty of time to ring in the New Year as you desire. These special packages range from $220–$1600. To make reservations, call Susan at (914) 524-6398.

The Castle at Tarrytown,
400 Benedict Ave.,
Tarrytown, NY,
914-631-1980

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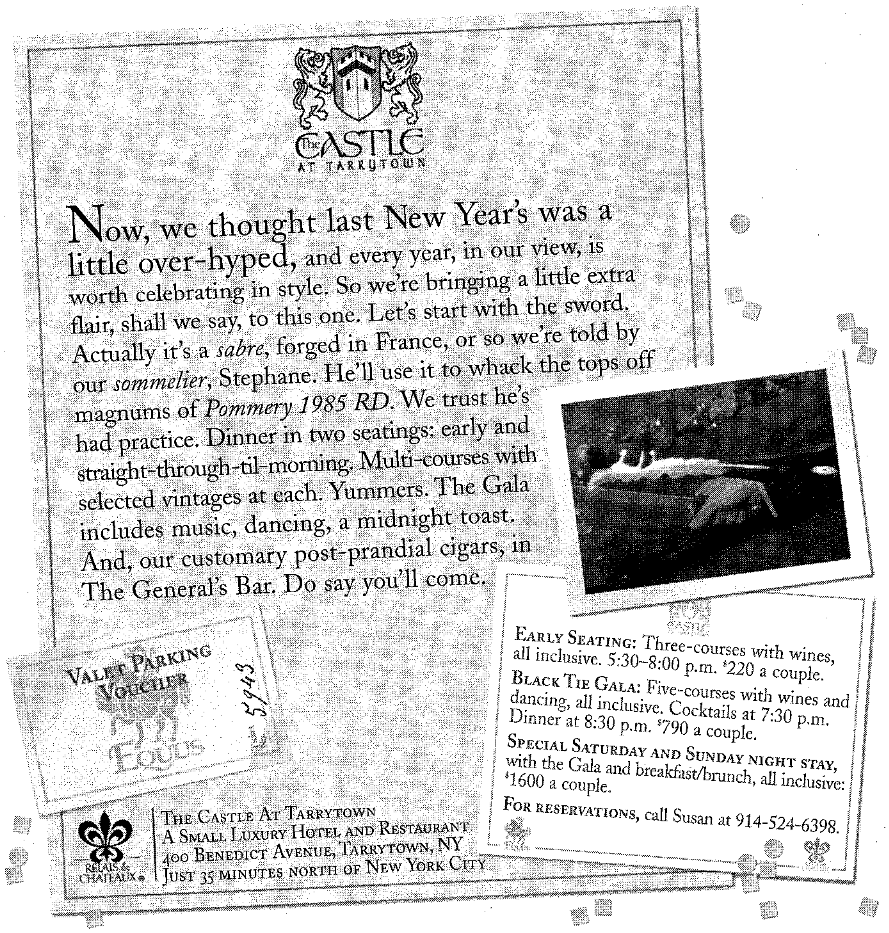
The CASTLE AT TARRYTOWN

Now, we thought last New Year's was a little over-hyped, and every year, in our view, is worth celebrating in style. So we're bringing a little extra flair, shall we say, to this one. Let's start with the sword. Actually it's a *sabre*, forged in France, or so we're told by our *sommelier*, Stephane. He'll use it to whack the tops off magnums of *Pommery 1985 RD*. We trust he's had practice. Dinner in two seatings: early and straight-through-til-morning. Multi-courses with selected vintages at each. Yummers. The Gala includes music, dancing, a midnight toast. And, our customary post-prandial cigars, in The General's Bar. Do say you'll come.

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cue

Movies

Edited by Derek de Koff

This Week's Releases

Cast Away
See Rainer, page 168. (2 hrs.; PG-13) • Opens 12/22.

Chocolat
Juliette Binoche plays the owner of a chocolate shop whose dainties bewitch a small town. Co-stars Johnny Depp and Alfred Molina; Lasse Hallström directs. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/15.

Dude, Where's My Car?
Ashton Kutcher and Seann William Scott co-star in this raunchy road film à la *Road Trip*, which involves pudding, angry girlfriends, and amnesia. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/15.

The Emperor's New Groove
Eartha Kitt, Sting, and David Spade lend their voices to this animated fable about an ancient diva with witchy powers—with Kitt, of course, in the leading role. (1 hr. 12 mins.; G) • Opens 12/15.

An Everlasting Peace
This bizarre comedy stars Barry McEvoy and Brian F. O'Byrne as business partners in the wig industry, a job that brings them more trouble than they expected. Directed by Barry Levinson. (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) • Opens 12/15.

Family Man
Nicolas Cage stars as an investment banker who has the chance to see how life would've been different if he'd settled down with his college sweetheart (Téa Leoni). (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/15.

The Gift
Cate Blanchett stars as a clairvoyant who's trying to track down the murderer of a young girl (Katie Holmes). Co-stars Hilary Swank, Keanu Reeves, and Greg Kinnear. Directed by Sam Raimi. (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) • Opens 12/22.

Present company: *The Gift*'s Katie Holmes and Greg Kinnear.

Miss Congeniality
Sandra Bullock stars as a frumpy FBI agent who must disguise herself as a beauty-pageant contestant in order to nab some criminals. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/22.

O Brother, Where Art Thou?
See Rainer, page 168. (1 hr. 47 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/22.

Pollock
See Rainer, page 168. (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) • Opens 12/22.

State and Main
David Mamet's new comedy stars Phillip Seymour Hoffman, William H. Macy, and Sarah Jessica Parker as urban showbiz people who crash-land in a small rustic town to film their melodrama *The Old Mill*. (1 hr. 42 mins.; R) • Opens 12/22.

What Women Want
A male-chauvinist pig (Mel Gibson) sees the error of his ways after a bump on the head gives him the ability to read women's minds. Co-stars Helen Hunt. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 12/15.

New Films

★ Almost Famous
Cameron Crowe's sweetly engaging coming-of-age movie is set mostly in 1973, and it's about a 15-year-old rock journalist, played by Patrick Fugit, who hooks up with a touring, Led Zeppelin–ish band in order to write a cover story about them for *Rolling Stone*. The band's lead guitarist is played by Billy Crudup, who should finally become a star, and his chief groupie is played by Kate Hudson, whose character's baby fat is already starting to harden. Philip Seymour Hoffman, who may be the best character actor in America, is the rock critic Lester Bangs, the Yoda of the piece. (Rainer; 9/18/00) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • CC Village East; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; BAM Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill.

Bamboozled
Spike Lee's latest *cri de coeur* is about a black television writer, Pierre Delacroix (Damon Wayans), who is disgusted that his high-level ideas for black-themed TV have been shot down and in retribution creates a variety-act minstrel show featuring black performers in blackface. The show turns out to be a smash hit that spawns a national craze for blackface. There are so many buttons being pushed in this film, it's practically a compendium of all of Lee's previous provocations. But it's a hectoring, confused movie that ultimately mistakes rancor for argument and outrage for art. Jada Pinkett-Smith and Savion Glover co-star. (Rainer; 10/8/00) (2 hrs.; R) • Magic Johnson Harlem USA.

★ Best in Show
A marvelous comedy about dog-show entrants and their prize pets. Christopher Guest, who also stars as the owner of a bloodhound named Hubert, was the director and co-writer (with cast member Eugene Levy), and the film is right up there with his mockumentary *Waiting for Guffman*. The other performers, including Catherine O'Hara, Michael McKean, and Fred Willard, bring their best revue-sketch instincts to the material. The real prize specimens in this movie parade about on two legs, not four. (Rainer; 10/2/00) (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews State; Loews 72nd St. East; Sony Lincoln Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

Billy Elliot
A striking miner's son furtively studies ballet and eventually wins over his hard-nosed dad. This latest in a line of English movies about the quaintness of squalor seems primarily designed for American tourists; book your plane tickets early. The film is such a prodigious feat of four-hankie engineering that Julie Walters's fierce performance as the boy's dancing instructor may get lost in the suds, which would be an injustice far greater than anything young Billy has to endure. (Rainer; 10/23/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Sony Lincoln Square; BAM Rose Cinemas.

Bounce
Ben Affleck plays an ad exectuive who gives away his plane ticket to a man who dies when the plane crashes. Guilt-ridden, he tracks down the widow (Gwyneth Paltrow) and ends up falling in love with her. (1 hr. 42 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Crown Gotham; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ Charlie's Angels
Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore, and Lucy Liu play the new generation of Angels in this daffy, spirited movie, which also features a prize collection of male crazies, including Bill Murray, Tim Curry, and Crispin Glover. The music-video maven McG directed, and he understands why we're watching: to gawk at butt-stomping chicks in stretch-fabric actionwear having a high old time. (Rainer; 11/7/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.

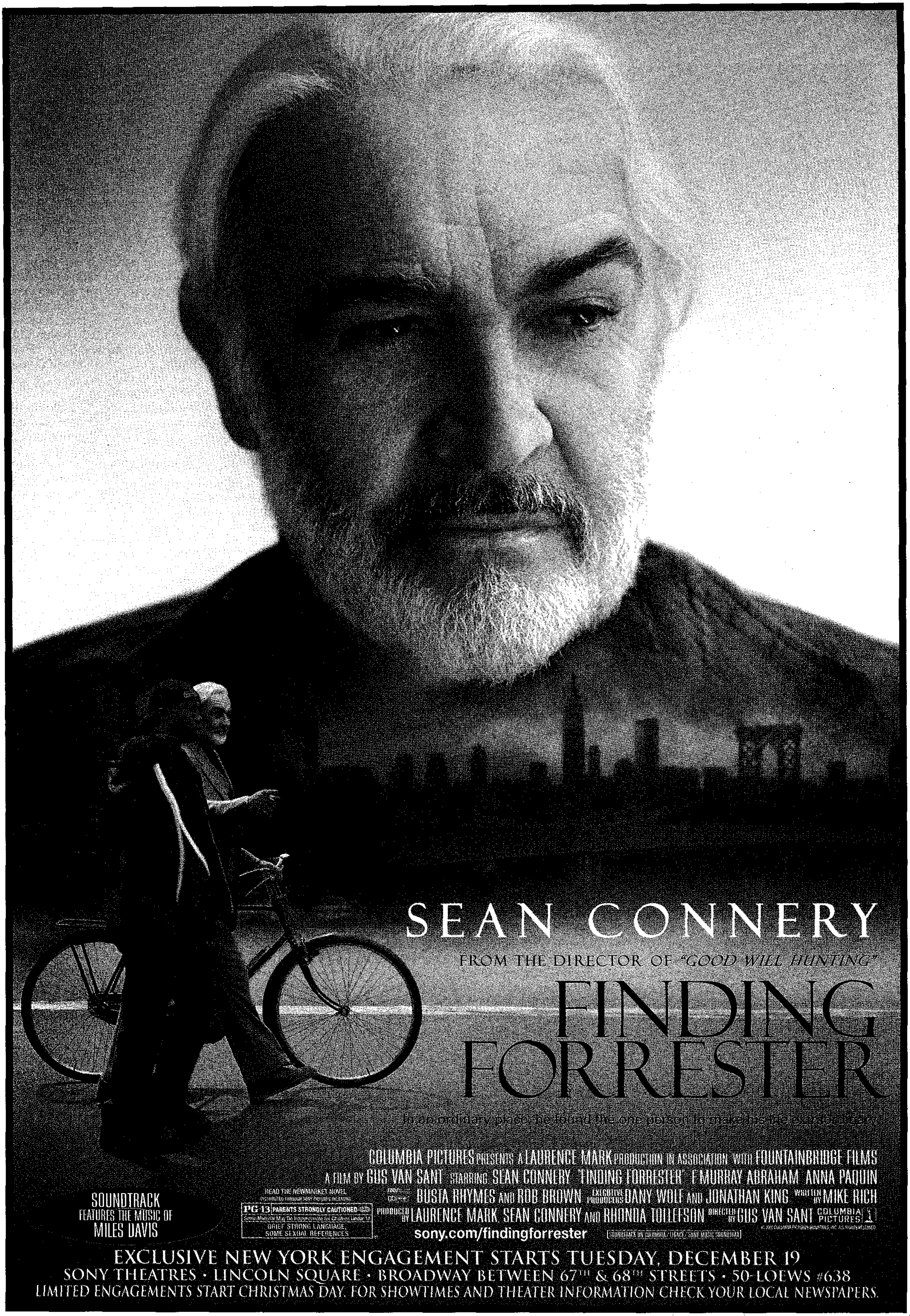
★ The Contender
Writer-director Rod Lurie has a flair for political

Opening

She's Got a Golden Ticket

Juliette Binoche (pictured), currently skulking her way through Harold Pinter's *Betrayal* on Broadway, highlights her lighter—not to say sweeter—side in **Chocolat**. This modern-day fable stars Binoche as the enchanting owner of a chocolate shop who seduces her small town with sweetmeats that seem to have an almost magical effect on all who gobble them. While one young townie (Johnny Depp) has fallen completely under her spell, a malignant old grump (Alfred Molina) wants to shut down her shop. Don't worry: Not only are there no freakish Oompa-Loompas on display, but the film is directed by the ever-capable Lasse Hallström (*My Life As a Dog*). Begins December 15.

Top photograph courtesy of Paramount Classics; bottom photograph by David Appleby.



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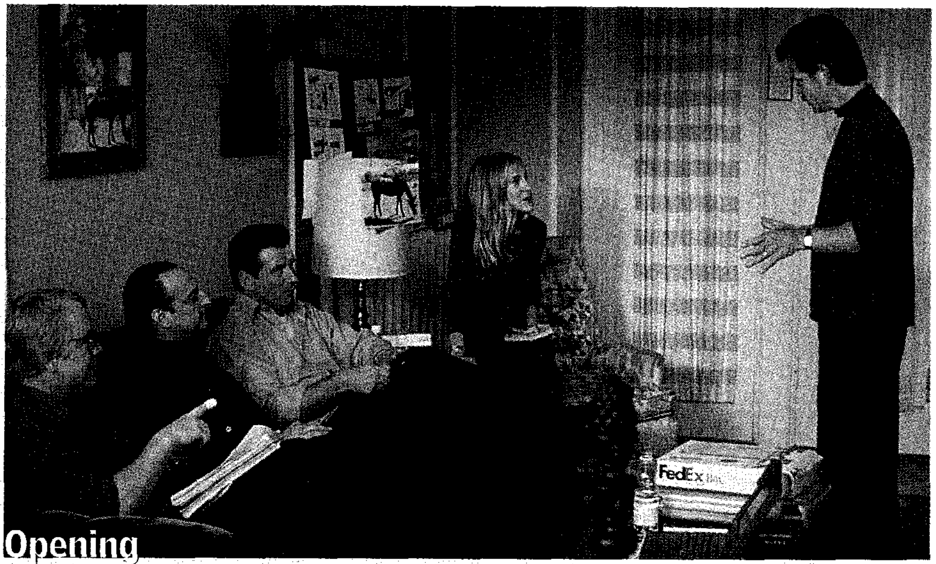


Opening

They're No Angels

David Mamet is his typically elusive self when it comes to discussing **State and Main**, his effectively scathing satire of both the Hollywood film industry and middle-American social mores. "It's not so much based on any of my actual experiences as the Thirty Years' War," he deadpans. "Of course, that whole thing went on way too long. There were too many instances involved—so I had to prune the whole damn thing." After an ungainly showbiz crew (played by Philip Seymour Hoffman, David Paymer, Alec Baldwin, Sarah Jessica Parker, and William H. Macy, pictured left to right) pour into fictitious Waterford, Vermont, to film their big-budget epic *The Old Mill*, they clash with the seemingly simple folk who live there, all of whom gradually prove to be at least as corrupt as their city visitors. "We actually filmed the movie in Manchester, Massachusetts," Mamet says. "And all I'll say is that everyone was happy to have us come, and happy to have us go." As for whether any of the industry bigwigs are based on actual people, he reveals, "The irascible Hollywood pit-bull producer is based on Art Linson; I can't quite call it a persona, because I think that word was copyrighted by Bergman. I'll just say he's the Jungian archetype of a feral producer." Asked if there's anything he'd like to add for our readers, Mamet pipes up, "Definitely. Do you realize that I won *New York*'s Mary Ann Madden 'Competition' not once but twice?" *State and Main* opens December 22. D.D.K.

melodrama and a gift for bringing out the grade-A cured ham in his talented cast. Joan Allen plays a senator who is suddenly called upon by the president, played by Jeff Bridges, to be confirmed as his VP when his sitting vice-president dies. A sex scandal in her past sets the Washington machinery humming. Lurie has a good time with the skulduggery and subterfuges of the political process, but he's also a big pontificator, and he turns the senator into a feminist standard-bearer for the right to privacy. The film would be better with less cant and more swill, but it's enjoyable anyway. (10/23/00) (2 hrs.; R) • Clearview's Beekman.

★ Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Set in nineteenth-century China, this Ang Lee movie is a ravishing martial-arts romance with sequences as magical as anything in the movies. Chow Yun Fat and Michelle Yeoh star as great warriors and friends with a deep, unspoken ardor for each other; Zhang Yiyi, a marvelous young actress, is their nemesis. The film, with action sequences choreographed by the great Yuen Wo-Ping (*The Matrix*), satisfies our desire for pop while at the same time transcending it. It's a poetic extravaganza. In Mandarin, with English subtitles. (Rainer; 12/11/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea; UA Gemini; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Dancer in the Dark

Björk won the Best Actress award at Cannes for her performance as a Czech immigrant in a working-class town in Washington State who is going blind and is trying to prevent her son from going blind, too. The director Lars Von Trier stages fantasy musical numbers for this aggrieved waif that are on the same high level as the numbers in *At Long Last Love* and *Everyone Says I Love You* (how low can you go?). Björk has her intensity, but Von Trier keeps piling on the extreme close-ups of her tremulous pathos. (Rainer; 10/2/00) (2 hrs. 19 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; Loews State; Clearview's Cobble Hill.

Dark Days

Marc Singer's fascinating documentary about the legendary Mole People, homeless folk who live deep within the bowels of Manhattan's subway system. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Jim Carrey is the live-action embodiment of Dr. Seuss's classic Christmas grump. Ron Howard directs. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Coronet; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

★ Dr. T & the Women

A lyrically loony comedy from Robert Altman and his screenwriter Ann Rap (*Cookie's Fortune*) about a Dallas gynecologist, played extremely well by Richard Gere in a moonstruck mode. His Dr. T believes women should be revered, and there are many who would love to revere him back. Most movies about men who love women end up exposing the men as cads, but Dr. T has a deluded tenderness that recalls Warren Beatty in *Shampoo*. It's a lovely comedy. Helen Hunt, Kate Hudson, and Shelley Long co-star. (Rainer; 10/16/00) (2 hrs.; R) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

Dungeons & Dragons

The impossibly dull role-playing game that has gotten many people brutally beaten up in junior high school becomes a full-blown action film starring Jeremy Irons and Carroll Cartwright. (1 hr. 47 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Sutton; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ George Washington

David Gordon Green, a first-time writer-director of feature films, has a light, lyrical, impressionist gift and a gentle, uncondescending approach to children's lives. Set in a southern town and featuring a cast of mostly African-American nonprofessional preteens, the movie is about the ways in which these children relate and survive. It's a genial dream-walk of a movie that could use a firmer strut. (Rainer; 11/6/00) (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • The Screening Room.

★ A Hard Day's Night

Newly restored and digitalized and still great after all these years—35, to be exact. The Beatles look impossibly young, but the film is far too much fun to wax nostalgic over. Richard Lester directed, with a freshness that, if anything, makes it seem more up-to-date stylistically than when it came out. (Rainer; 12/11/00) (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) • Film Forum.

Lies

Korean filmmaker Jan Sun Woo presents this lurid sexual adventure (originally banned in Korea) about a married 38-year-old sculptor (Lee Sang Hyun) who ends up deflowering an 18-year-old student (Kim Tae Yeon) who eagerly wants to lose her virginity. (1 hr. 55 mins.; NR) • The Screening Room; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3.

Little Nicky

Adam Sandler stars as the put-upon lovechild of Lucifer and an angel, trying to make his way in the world. (1 hr. 29 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

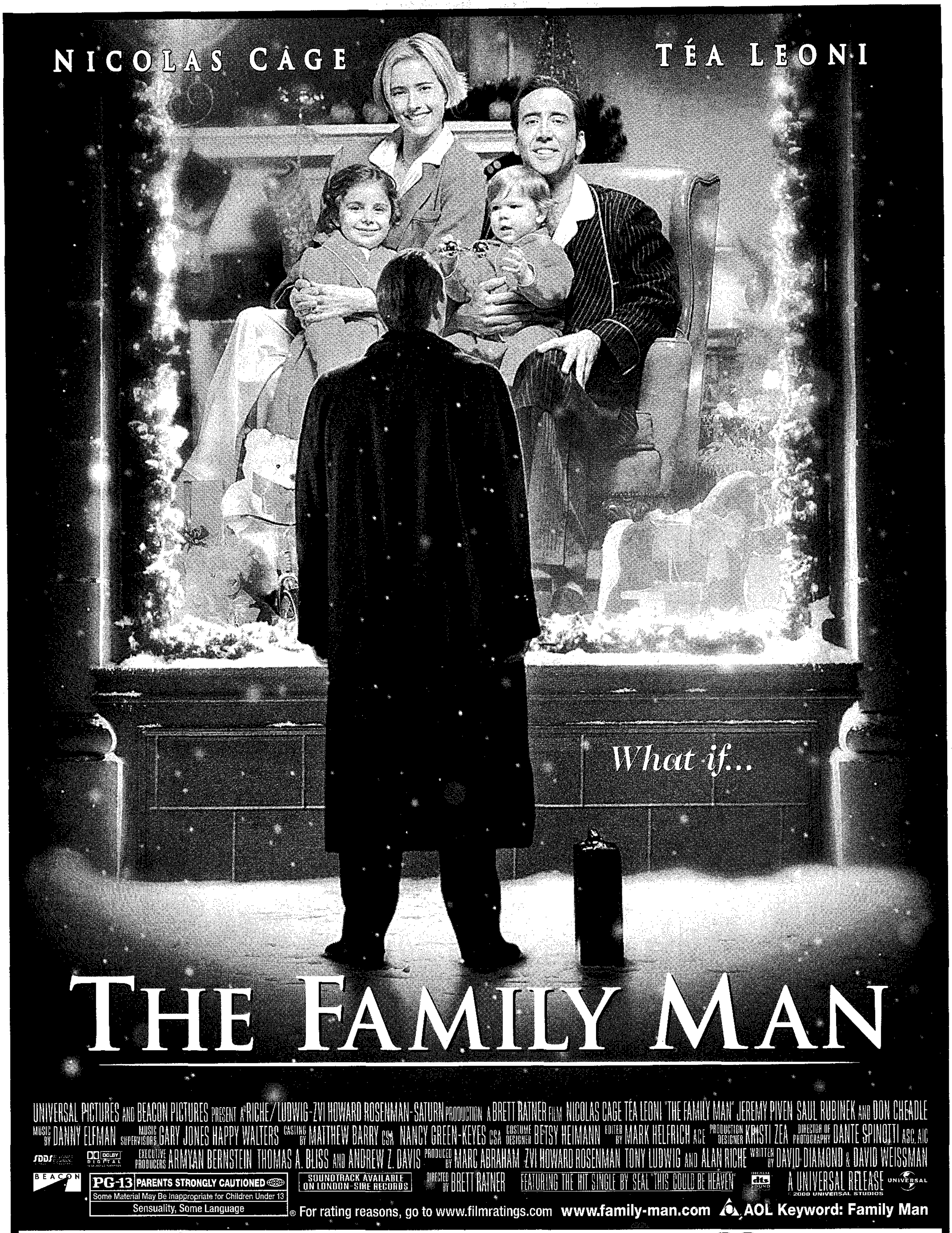
The Little Vampire

A children's film about a prepubescent bloodsucker. Directed by Uli Edel. (1 hr. 32 mins.; G) • CO Worldwide Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Ground Rules

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote current releases that New York recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. Reviews are followed by the names of theaters where the film is playing.

Photograph by J. Bridges/Fine Line.



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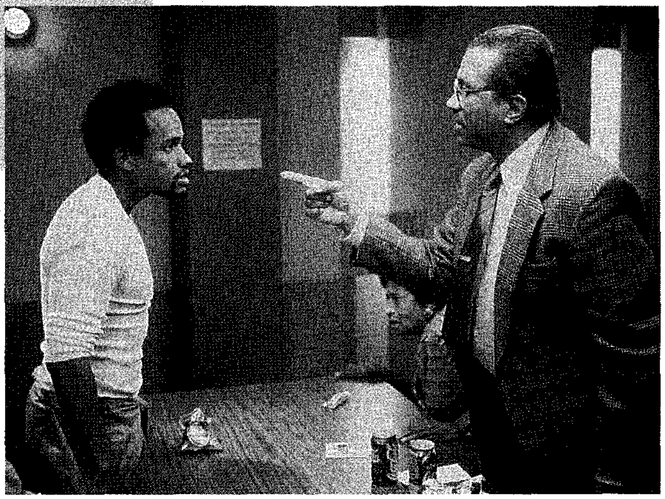
Opening

Prison Bells Are Ringing

Although it's not exactly going to make moviegoers glow with holiday warmth, Jordan Walker-Pearlman's **The Visit** is perfect fare for those who equate the last few weeks of December with soul-crushing depression. The jailhouse drama, based on a true story, centers on Alex Waters (Hill Harper, pictured, with Billy Dee Williams), a man who's been sentenced to 25 years in prison for a rape he insists he never committed. Plagued by fears and personal demons—most involving the fact that he's contracted the AIDS virus—he starts seeking solace in the advice of the prison psychiatrist Dr. Coles (*The Cosby Show*'s Phylicia Rashad). Aiming to put his life into a more positive perspective, Waters attempts to confront his family and friends, particularly his domineering father (Williams) and his childhood buddy Felicia (Rae Dawn Chong), who is herself a recovering crack addict and incest survivor. As we said, a far cry from *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas*—but worth keeping in mind if you prefer your trees unplugged. Begins December 15.



Photograph by Jim Sheldon.

Lucky Numbers

Nora Ephron's comedy stars John Travolta as a financially troubled TV weatherman who attempts to rig the state lottery with the help of the kooky lotto girl (Lisa Kudrow). (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • CO Worldwide Cinemas.

★ Meet the Parents

Lots of dumb jokes and misfires, but the rapport between Ben Stiller, playing a prospective son-in-law, and Robert De Niro, as the martinet father of his girlfriend, is rich. De Niro's character used to be a CIA operative, and he turns every conversation into a debriefing; Stiller has played this ardent-patsy role before but never as well; there's a whole vortex of calculation behind that wall-eyed stare of his. (Rainer; 10/9/00) (1 hr. 48 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Men of Honor

Cuba Gooding, Jr. stars as Carl Brashear, the real-life Navy diver who became the first African-American to break the color line; Robert De Niro is the cracker commander who tries to wreck Carl's ambitions and later becomes his gadfly ally. The film's testimonial-like tone doesn't make for an enlivening portrayal of heroism. Because of the racism he was opposing, Brashear's monomania to succeed in the Navy at all costs is depicted by the filmmakers as the height of valor. Whatever is disturbing or enraging about Brashear is sublimated to a bland highmindedness. (2 hrs. 8 mins.; R) • CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

102 Dalmations

Glenn Close reprises her role as the Dalmatian-hungry Cruella De Vil in this follow-up to the 1992 film. Also stars Gerard Depardieu. (1 hr. 41 mins.; G) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Pay It Forward

This heavy heaping of inspirationalism has the ungainliness of a political-party platform; child abuse, alcoholism, violence in the schools, and much more fill out this fable about a sad, spunky seventh-grader (Haley Joel Osment) who devises a way to make people pay on the favors they've received in life. Helen Hunt plays his mother; Kevin Spacey, his social-studies teacher. The film's slow-drawn deliberativeness is meant to clue us in that something weighty is going on, but most of this fable is second-rate sermonizing couched in psychobabble. (Rainer; 10/30/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) • Kew Gardens Cinemas; North Shore Towers.

★ Quills

Philip Kaufman's movie about the Marquis de Sade, written by Doug Wright from his Obie-winning play, is a voluptuous impasto that mixes together angels and demons in a richly ambiguous swirl. Geoffrey Rush plays Sade, imprisoned in the Charenton Asylum for the Insane, and he's a degenerate fop who smuggles scurrilous screeds out into the world with the help of a chambermaid (a radiant Kate Winslet) and gets obliterated for his troubles. Michael Caine is the doctor-torturer who puts the screws to Sade; Joaquin Phoenix is the abbé at Charenton whose progressive ideas do not survive the riotous hypocrisies of the times. Kaufman soft-pedals Sade's basest aspects, but there's tremendous verve and intelligence in his filmmaking, and in the performances he's elicited. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Rugrats in Paris: The Movie

Those especially shrill animated children from the popular TV show shriek and bleat their way onto the big screen. (1 hr. 18 mins.; G) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews New York Twin; UA East; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

The 6th Day

In the not-too-distant future, anything can be cloned—even Arnold Schwarzenegger, who plays a pilot faced with his double, the work of a nefarious DNA specialist. (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Marboro; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ A Time for Drunken Horses

Iranian filmmaker Bahman Ghobadi has a wonderful feeling for children's faces; he sees in them not merely an innocence but a preternatural maturity as well. At times it's as if we are looking into these faces and seeing the whole life that will eventually be imprinted upon them. His movie is about the hardships of a band of brothers and sisters in the remote, mountainous regions of Kurdish Iran. (Rainer; 11/6/00) (1 hr. 17 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

★ Unbreakable

M. Night Shyamalan's follow-up to *The Sixth Sense* is almost as good—it has the same nocturnal sense of dread and a satisfyingly surprising ending. Bruce Willis plays a security guard who alone survives a massive train wreck. Why? Samuel Jackson is a comic-book art collector named Elijah, as in the prophet, and his stare looks like it could burn a hole in Superman's Fortress of Solitude. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (1 hr. 47 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Venus Beauty Institute

A feisty beautician (Nathalie Baye) deals with her pressures at work with a bevy of one-night stands, until a passionate young man (Samuel Le Bihan) threatens to have her fall in love. (1 hr. 52 mins.; NR) • Quad Cinema; Clearview's 59th Street East.

Vertical Limit

Chris O'Donnell stars as a climber who must rescue his sister atop the peaks of K2, one of the world's highest and most treacherous mountains. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; UA Gemini; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

The Weekend

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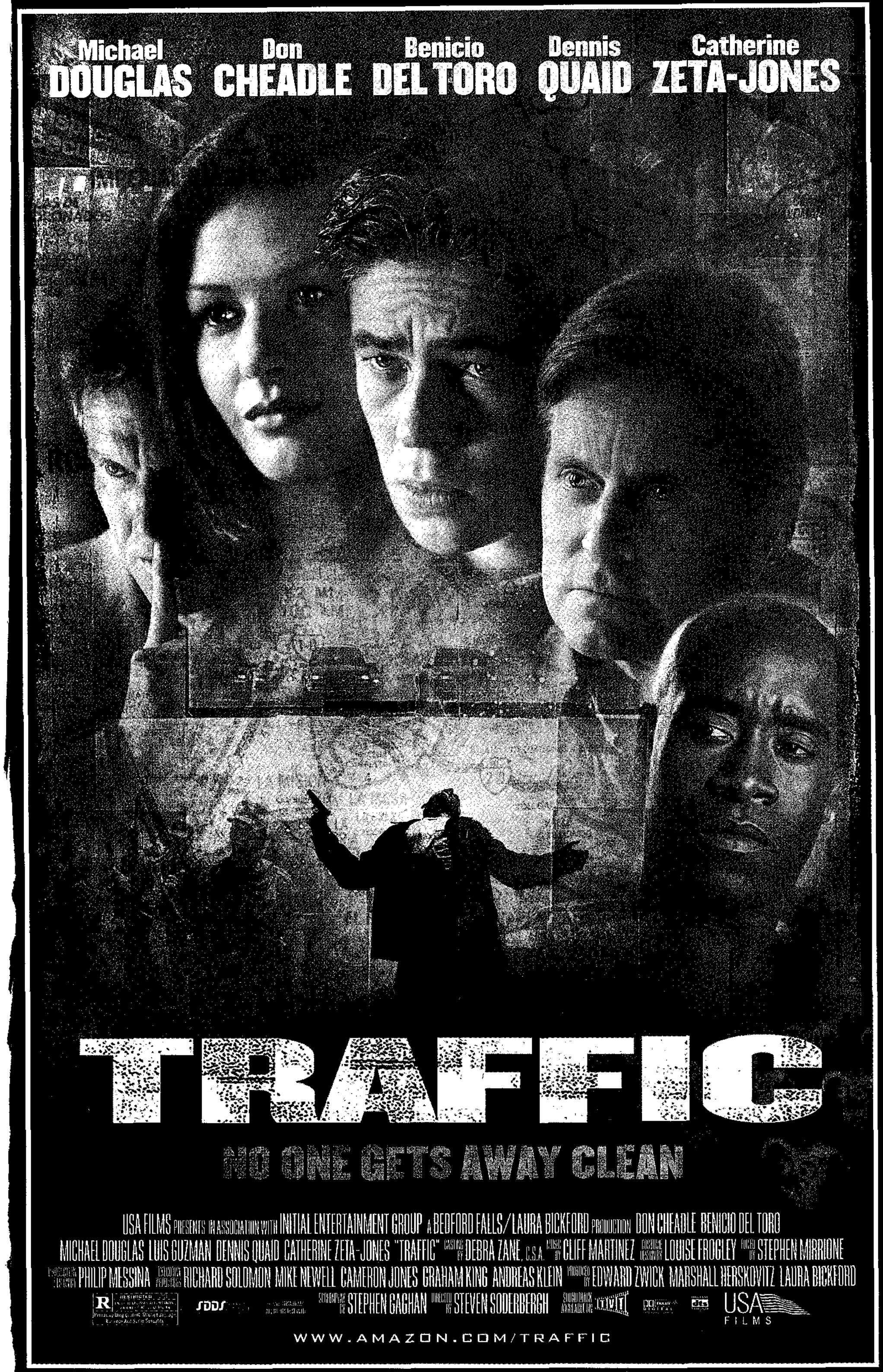
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for the anniversary of an acquaintance's death. Soon enough, they start tearing one another's psyches apart. (1 hr. 16 mins; PG) • Quad Cinema.

★ Wonder Boys

A superb comedy, starring Michael Douglas as a college creative-writing professor in Pittsburgh whose wife has walked out on him, about the long weekend in which his life unravels and ties itself up again. Tobey Maguire co-stars as the student who acts as a kind of surrogate son/comrade-in-arms. The terrific cast also includes Robert Downey Jr. and Frances McDormand. Curtis Hanson directed, lyrically and lucidly, from Steve Kloves's adaptation of Michael Chabon's 1995 novel. (Rainer; 3/6/00) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • Loews Village; Sony Lincoln Square.

★ The Yards

James Gray's second feature, about corruption and family in the mob scene in Queens, is mostly powerful, though it becomes overly familiar by the end. The cast is amazing: James Caan, Joaquin Phoenix, Mark Wahlberg, Faye Dunaway, Ellen Burstyn, Charlize Theron. They set up a force field that keeps you watching. (Rainer; 10/30/00) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) • CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Atrium.

★ You Can Count On Me

Writer-director Kenneth Lonergan's wonderfully small-scale movie stars Mark Ruffalo and Laura Linney as reunited brother and sister, and theirs is one of the most convincing portrayals of family connection I've ever seen. They get all the feints and parries between siblings just right. It's a marvelous little movie that dispenses with much of the mushiness and grand revelations one might expect from this sort of material. Rory Culkin plays Linney's 8-year-old son and Matthew Broderick, in a sweetly cracked performance, is the boss she has an affair with. ((Rainer; 10/23/00)) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Battery Park City Cinema
102 North End Avenue (212-945-3418) • 102 Dalmations; Best in Show; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

CC Angelika Film Center
18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Billy Elliot; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Quills; You Can Count On Me.

CC Village East
189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • 102 Dalmations; Almost Famous; Best in Show; Dungeons & Dragons; Men of Honor; The Yards.

Cinema Village
22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • Dark Days; Moon Shadows; Spring Forward; A Time for Drunken Horses; Trade Off.

Clearview's Waverly
323 Sixth Ave. (212-777-FILM#603) • Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Loews Village
66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Charlie's Angels; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Wonder Boys.

Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • The Broken Hearts Club; Venus Beauty Institute; The Weekend; What's Cooking?.

The Screening Room
54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • George Washington; Lies; The Broken Hearts Club; This Is Spinal Tap. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square
13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • Bounce; Dancer in the Dark; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Proof of Life; Requiem for a Dream; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas
160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • 102 Dalmations; Left Luggage; Men of Honor; The Yards.

Clearview's Chelsea
260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Bounce; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Clearview's Chelsea West
333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • Proof of Life.

Loews 19th St. East
890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • 102 Dalmations; Best in Show; Charlie's Angels; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Loews Kips Bay Theatre
570 Second Ave. (212-505-6397#558) • Best in Show; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3
1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • Billy Elliot; Lies; Unbreakable.

CC Crown Gotham
969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) • Bounce.

CC Sutton
205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) • 102 Dalmations; Dungeons & Dragons.

Clearview's 59th Street East
239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • Venus Beauty Institute.

Clearview's Ziegfeld
141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • Men of Honor.

CO Worldwide Cinemas
340 W. 50th St. (212-505-CINE#610) • Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2; The Cell; Dr. T & the Women; The Exorcist: The Version You've Never Seen; Girlfight; The Ladies Man; The Little Vampire; Lucky Numbers; Scary Movie.

Loews 42nd Street E Walk
42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • 102 Dalmations; The Legend of Bagger Vance; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

Loews Astor Plaza
44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Red Planet.

Loews Coronet
993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (212-505-CINE#608) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas.

Loews State
1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Best in Show; Dancer in the Dark; The Legend of Drunken Master; What's Cooking?.

Paris Theatre
4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • La Bûche.

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East
210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • 102 Dalmations; Bounce; Dungeons & Dragons; The 6th Day.

Clearview's Beekman
1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (212-777-FILM#606) • The Contender.

Clearview's First & 62nd St.
400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Almost Famous; Chicken Run; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Spring Forward; The 6th Day; You Can Count On Me.

Clearview's Park and 86th St.
125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • Men of Honor.

Loews 72nd St. East
1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Best in Show.

Loews New York Twin
1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#698) • The Legend of Bagger Vance; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Loews Orpheum 7
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Unbreakable.

UA East
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

UA Gemini
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Charlie's Angels; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Vertical Limit.

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • Men of Honor.

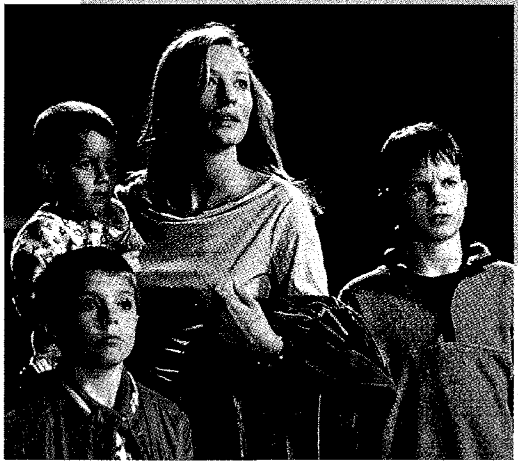
Clearview's Metro Cinema
2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (212-777-FILM#609) • Meet the Parents; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Clearview's Olympia
2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (212-777-FILM#613) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.

Opening

Tired of All Those Phony Psychics?

As Hollywood's barrage of half-baked supernatural thrillers thunders on, you'll do well to avoid any upcoming film with creepy occult trimmings. But we urge you to give **The Gift** a try. The intricate story involves a Georgia widow (Cate Blanchett, pictured) who gives incredibly apt psychic readings to the townies when she's not looking after her three sons. After she's plagued by visions of the butchering of a missing girl (Katie Holmes), fingers start pointing at a local with a history of wife-beating (Keanu Reeves). Although the plot couldn't be more intriguing, moviegoers will be lining up to see—no joke—Reeves's riveting (and terrifying) performance. Opens December 20.



Photograph courtesy of Paramount Classics; David Appleton.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Quills; A Time for Drunken Horses.

Loews 84th Street
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

Magic Johnson Harlem USA
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • 102 Dalmations; Bamboozled; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

New Coliseum
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • 102 Dalmations; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Nova
3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Sony Lincoln Square
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • 102 Dalmations; Best in Show; Billy Elliot; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Wonder Boys; You Can Count On Me.

Bronx

Bay Plaza
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Proof of Life; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Concourse Plaza
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Whitestone
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Almost Famous; Billy Elliot; You Can Count On Me. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights
70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) • Call theater for showtimes.

Canarsie
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-718-251-0700) • 102 Dalmations; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.

Clearview's Cobble Hill
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • Almost Famous; Dancer in the Dark; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Red Planet; What's Cooking?.

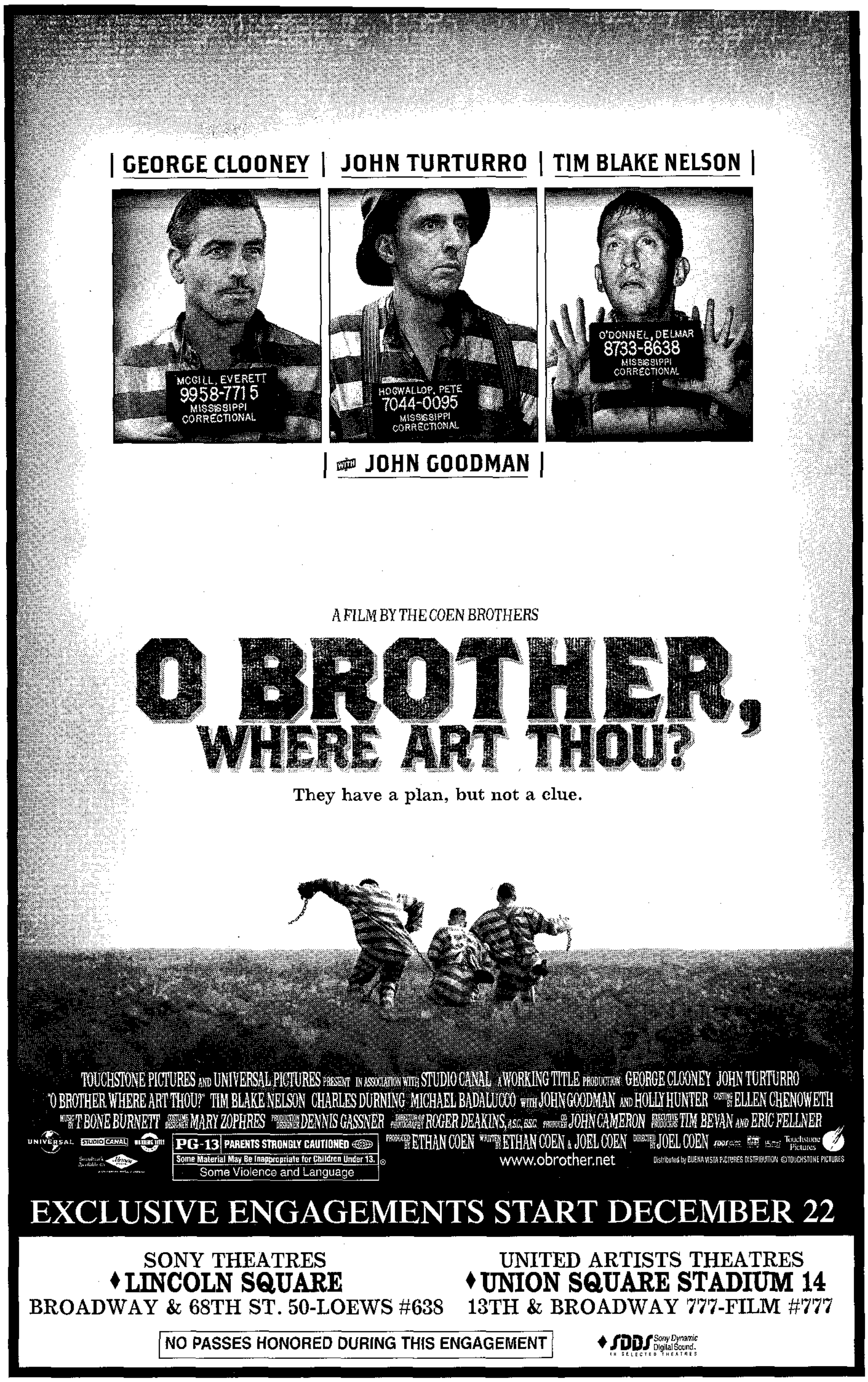
CO Alpine
6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (718-777-FILM#580) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Fortway
6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (718-777-FILM#578) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Kings Plaza
5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (718-777-FILM#579) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Kingsway
946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (718-777-FILM#577) • *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • 102 Dalmations; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Unbreakable.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Trailers

TALK OF THE TOWN **Matthew McConaughey** is in town shooting *13 Conversations About One Thing* under director **Jill Sprecher**. The Stonelock production, also featuring **Queen Latifah**, follows five intertwining New York stories, including one in which McConaughey plays an attorney involved in a hit-and-run accident with a student played by **Clea DuVall** (*Girl, Interrupted*). **Michael Stipe**'s Single Cell Pictures will co-produce.

HARD-KNOCK LIFE Also wrapping up production in Manhattan is *Love the Hard Way,* a romance from Open City Films and several international co-producers. **Adrien Brody** (*Summer of Sam*) stars as a hardened con man whose affair with an innocent student disrupts his criminal lifestyle. Blaxploitation star **Pam Grier** plays the detective who's after him; **Peter Sehr** will direct.

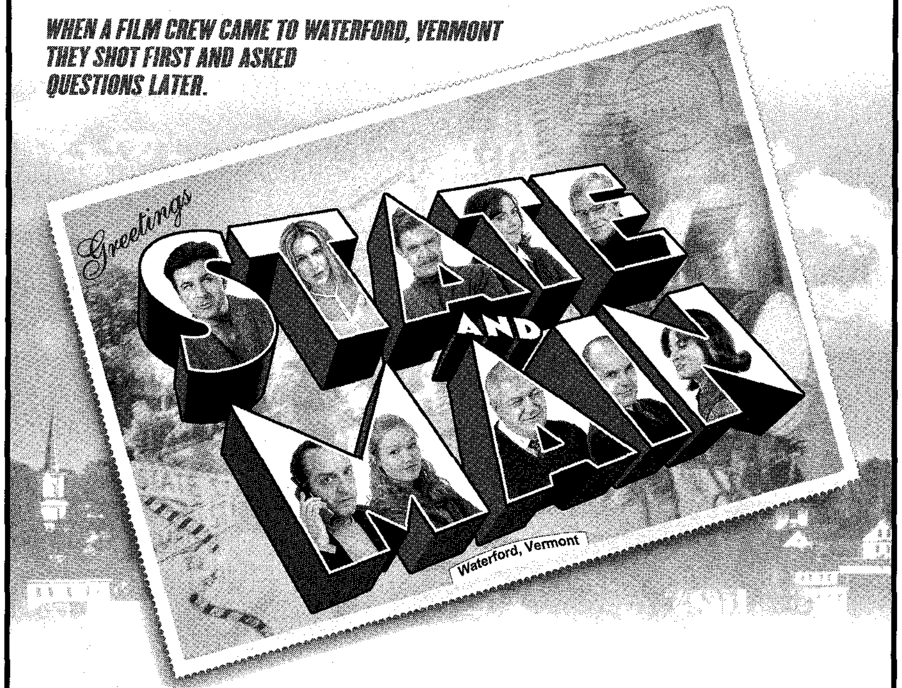
***SPEED* DIALING** **Colin Farrell**, **Forest Whitaker**, and **Katie Holmes** are finishing up work on *Phone Booth* under director **Joel Schumacher**. The 20th Century Fox film is a suspense thriller about a New York City publicist (Farrell) who is trapped in a phone booth and forced to do as the terrorist on the other end of the line says—or face deadly consequences.

MAKING FUNNY *The Jimmy Show,* starring **Ethan Hawke** as an inept inventor from New Jersey, will be shooting in Staten Island this week. The Stonelock production (under **Beni Atoori**) chronicles the inventor's attempts to embark on a career in stand-up comedy, and his subsequent failure. Frank Whaley will direct and play a minor role. SARA CARDACE

Photographs by Fitzroy Barrett/Globe Photos.

ALEC BALDWIN CHARLES DURNING CLARK GREGG PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN PATTI LuPONE
WILLIAM H. MACY SARAH JESSICA PARKER DAVID PAYMER REBECCA PIDGEON JULIA STILES

WHEN A FILM CREW CAME TO WATERFORD, VERMONT
THEY SHOT FIRST AND ASKED
QUESTIONS LATER.



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Pavilion
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Ridgewood
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

UA Marboro
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • 102 Dalmations; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay
3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Queens

Centre Sunnyside
42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Red Planet; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day.

Cinemart
106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • 102 Dalmations; Little Nicky; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

CO Cinema City
183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (718-777-FILM#592) • Call theater for showtimes.

CO Fresh Meadows
Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (718-777-FILM#619) • Call theater for showtimes.

College Point Multiplex
28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Jackson Triplex
82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable.

Kaufman Astoria Cinema
38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • Bounce; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Proof of Life; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

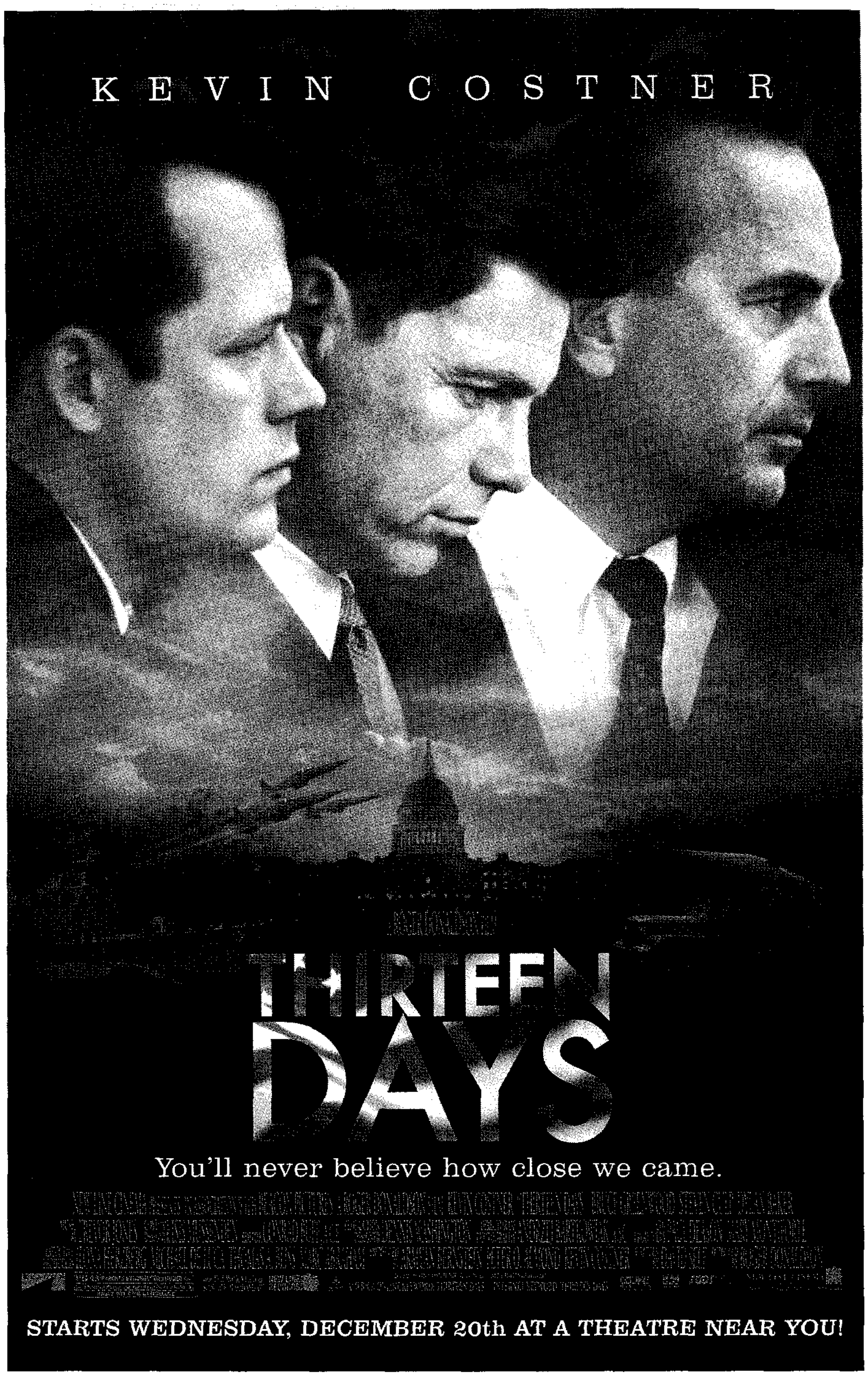
Kew Gardens Cinemas
81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Best in Show; The Little Vampire; Pay It Forward; Requiem for a Dream; What's Cooking?; Yi Yi; You Can Count On Me.

Main Street Cinemas
72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Digimon: The Movie; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

North Shore Towers
27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) • Best in Show; Girl on the Bridge; Kippur; Pay It Forward.

Plaza
103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • 102 Dalmations; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

Sony Bay Terrace
211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (718-777-FILM#712) • Call theater for showtimes.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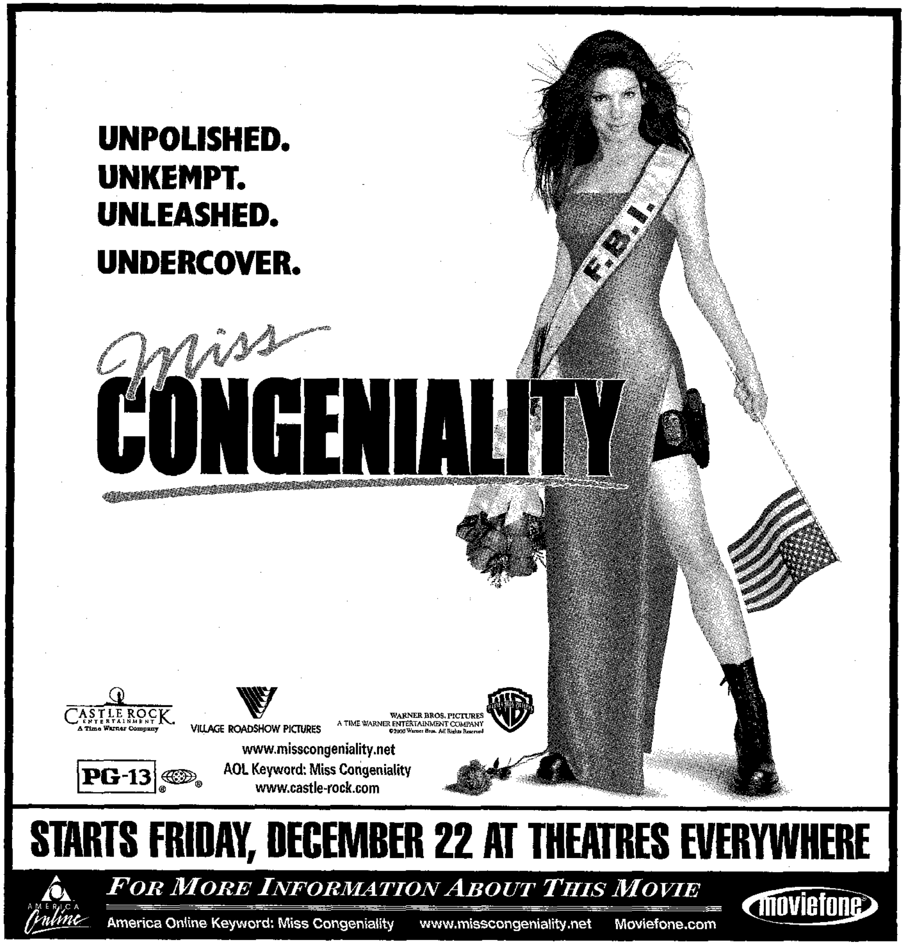

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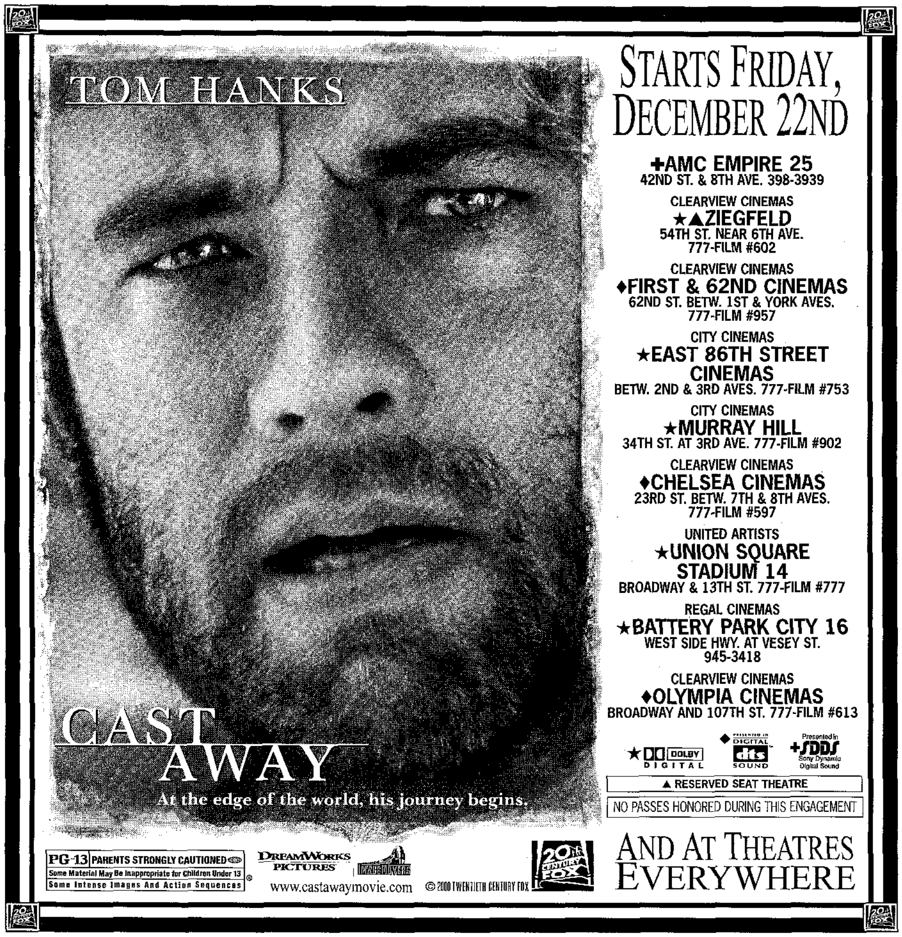

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62ND ST. BETW. 1ST & YORK AVES.
777-FILM #957

CITY CINEMAS
★EAST 86TH STREET CINEMAS
BETW. 2ND & 3RD AVES. 777-FILM #753

CITY CINEMAS
★MURRAY HILL
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Sony Elmwood
57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (718-777-FILM#733) • Call theater for showtimes.

UA Astoria
28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) • 102 Dalmations; Charlie's Angels; Dungeons & Dragons; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

UA Brandon Cinema
70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • The Legend of Bagger Vance; Red Planet; The 6th Day.

UA Crossbay
94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Meet the Parents; The 6th Day; Unbreakable.

UA Crossbay II
92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • 102 Dalmations; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie.

UA Midway
108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills

Opening

Not-so-excellent Adventure

Are raunchy road movies here to stay? The answer may depend heavily on the success of **Dude, Where's My Car?**, which pairs up Ashton Kutcher from *That '70s Show* with Seann William Scott, who co-starred in both *American Pie* and *Road Trip*, the two films that inarguably inspired this one. Scott and Kutcher (pictured from left) play the titular dudes, who awake one morning with no memory of what they did, who they did it to, or where they parked. Telltale clues include a lifetime supply of pudding in their fridge, a smashed-up house, and a pair of very angry girlfriends. As the boys retrace their steps, they fall into naughtier and naughtier trouble—but by now, you've probably figured that out on your own. Begins December 15.

Photograph by Tracy Bennett.

(718-544-5545) • Billy Elliot; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Vertical Limit.

UA Movies at Bayside
38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Vertical Limit.

UA Movieworld
242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • 102 Dalmations; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Vertical Limit.

Staten Island

Atrium
680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • 102 Dalmations; Bounce; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit; The Yards.

UA Hylan Plaza
107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Little Nicky; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

UA Movies at Staten Island
141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • 102 Dalmations; Bounce; Charlie's Angels; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Dungeons & Dragons; Little Nicky; Meet the Parents; Men of Honor; Proof of Life; Rugrats in Paris: The Movie; The 6th Day; Unbreakable; Vertical Limit.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image
36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free. • "Repertory Nights." 12/16: *Playtime* (1968). 12/17: *L'Atalante* (1934). 12/23: *Fanny and Alexander* (1982).

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn. (718-623-2770). • 12/12: "Films by Daniel Schmid." *Tosca's Kiss* (1984). 12/13: "Cinemachat." *Avanti!* (1972). 12/14–12/17: "Everyday Courage: Czech Film From Machaty to the 60s." *Reports on the Party and the Guests* (1966). 12/15: *The Ear* (1970). 12/16: *Birds, Orphans, and Fools* (1969). 12/17: *Everyday Courage* (1964). 12/18: "Resnais Retrospective." *No Smoking* (1993). 12/19: "Films by Daniel Schmid." *La Paloma* (1974). 12/20: "Sounds of Silents." *Diary of a Lost Girl* (1929). 12/21–12/25: "BAMcinématek Favorites." 12/21: *Tom Jones* (1963). 12/22–12/23: *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). 12/24–12/25: *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993).

Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 372; www.brooklynart.org); free. • 12/16: *Wings of Desire* (1987). 12/7: *The Black Stallion* (1979). 12/23: *Ikiru* (1952); *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). 12/24: *Fly Away Home* (1996).

Film Society of Lincoln Center
(The Walter Reade Theater) 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); $8.50, $5 for members, $4.50 for seniors, $4 for "Movies for Kids." • Through 12/27: "Spanish Cinema Now." 12/12: *Compassionate Sex* (2000). 12/13: *To Die (Or Not)* (1999). 12/14: *The Goalkeeper* (2000); *To Those Who Love* (1998); *Tampopo* (1986). 12/15: *Yoyes* (1999); *My Name Is Sara* (1998); *Regarding Buñuel* (2000). 12/16: *To Those Who Love* (1998); *Nico and Dani* (2000); *Asfalto* (1999). 12/17: *The Goalkeeper*; *Yoyes*; *Regarding Buñuel*; *Leo*; *Nico and Dani*. 12/19: *Leo*; *Nico and Dani*. 12/20: *Jamón, Jamón* (1991). 12/21: *The Dog in the Manger* (1995); *Flowers From Another World* (1999). 12/22: *Gitano* (2000); *I Know Who You Are* (1999). 12/23: *Ecstacy*; *Gitano*; *Plenilunio* (2000). 12/24: *The Mafia in Havana*; *The Washington Wolves*.

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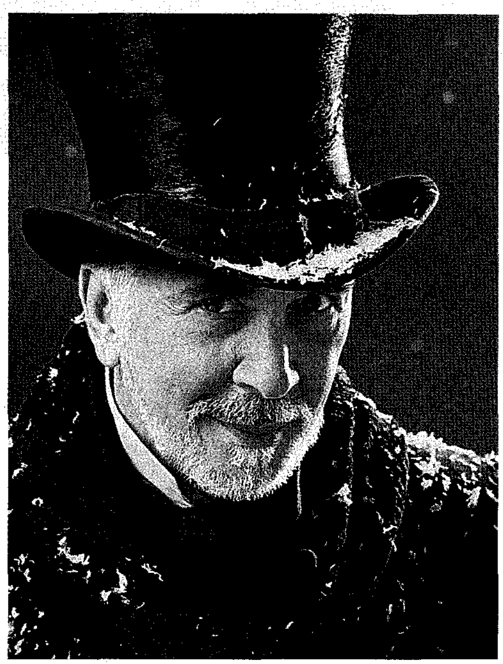
Edited by Logan Hill

Onstage

Dancin' Dickens

Forget the Grinch: Scrooge, the original Mean One, is back for another go-round with those scenery-chewing, chain-clanking spirits. Frank Langella (pictured) plays the nasty, nasty man in the annual Madison Square Garden production of **A Christmas Carol**, choreographed by Susan Stroman (*Contact*), through December 31. (See "Off Broadway.")



Broadway

Now Playing

Aida

The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

Annie Get Your Gun

Cheryl Ladd plays Annie Oakley. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).

Beauty and the Beast

Disney's beast is back (no, not the mouse). $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

Betrayal

Director David Leveaux (last season's powerful revival of Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*) directs Juliette Binoche, Liev Schreiber, and John Slattery in Harold Pinter's intricate tale of love, lust, and the pain of adultery. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Cabaret

The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for recreating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. This revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Matt McGrath (*Hedwig*) and Lea Thompson. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Chicago

It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Now featuring Jasmine Guy and Charlotte D'Amboise. $20–$85. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Contact

This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Copenhagen

A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Dinner Party

Neil Simon's unabashedly contrived new comedy features three men, two of their ex-wives, and a mysterious man who has locked them all in a Paris dining room together. Henry Winkler and John Ritter star. $20–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Dirty Blonde

Brash actress-author Claudia Shear stars in her delightful play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Fosse

A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago*. $65–$80. Mon., Tues., and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2. • Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Full Monty

The musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. $31–$86. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Gore Vidal's The Best Man

Chris Noth and Spalding Gray play opposing presidential candidates in Gore Vidal's drama, joined by Elizabeth Ashley, Charles Durning, Christine Ebersole, Jonathan Hadary, and Michael Learned. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).

Jane Eyre

Few shows boast a production team with this pedigree, starting with John Caird (*Les Misérables, Nicholas Nickleby,* both with Trevor Nunn), who adapted and staged (with Scott Schwartz) the Charlotte Brontë novel. This musical, with a score by pop composer Paul Gordon, received very mixed reviews at the La Jolla Playhouse—but broke box-office records. $50–$86. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

Jekyll & Hyde

Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Now starring David Hasselhoff. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/7. • Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Kiss Me, Kate

With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Les Misérables

The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Lion King

This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and

Ground Rules

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Photograph by Firooz Zahedi.

Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

Miss Saigon

A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of *Madama Butterfly*. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. Through 1/28. • Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).

The Music Man

Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. As she has steadily demonstrated, she is blessed with the voice, the looks, and the acting talent of a musical-comedy diva. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera

Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Proof

David Auburn's *Proof* is what *Copenhagen* ought to be: a play about scientists whose science matters less than their humanity. Here, those of us who want their dramatic characters to be real people need not feel excluded. Robert, a world-famous mathematician who went crazy; Catherine, his mathematically brilliant but too-depressed-to-work daughter; Hal, a young math teacher going through Robert's hundred-plus confused notebooks; and Claire, Robert's older daughter and a successful actuary, are above all fascinating individuals. As directed by Daniel Sullivan, the performances are perfect. As for Mary-Louise Parker, her Catherine is a performance of genius. (Simon: 6/5/00.) $24–$69. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent

The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème*. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

Riverdance

The Irish return. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

The Rocky Horror Show

Christopher Ashley (*Jeffrey*) directs a surreal cast in Frank N. Furter's pad. Lifelong rocker Joan Jett makes her Broadway debut opposite *Rent* star Daphne Rubin-Vega, stage vet Tom Hewitt, comics Dick Cavett and Lea De Laria, and Alice Ripley of *Side Show* (very appropriate). $75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9:45, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

Saturday Night Fever

Flared pants! $35–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 12/30. • Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe

Lily Tomlin returns, along with an astonishing assortment of characters led by Trudy, a homeless lady and "creative consultant to these aliens from outer space" who knows that reality is really just "a collective hunch." The solo show that makes other solo shows look like, well, solo shows, it's written and directed by Jane Wagner, Tomlin's longtime collaborator and partner. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Seussical

Dr. Seuss may be the only children's brand with enough star power to battle Disney's troika of *The Lion King*, *Aida*, and *Beauty and the Beast*, but that may not be enough. $25–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $25–$85. • Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).

Swing!

The dance marathon continues. $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

Who would have expected from a campy downtown playwright a nicely structured, intelligently funny, satirically relevant uptown comedy? In Charles Busch's new play, the retired but still overactive allergist Dr. Ira Taub is married to Marjorie, an immobilized nervous wreck since the death of her therapist. If you seek an ideal cast, look no further. Linda Lavin, for whom the admiring Busch wrote Marjorie as, he says, a kind of King Lear, is that and more. (Simon: 3/13/00.) Also starring Tony Roberts and Michele Lee. $30–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant

A new adaptation of the Werner Fassbinder film about a lesbian affair between a fashion designer and a young model, directed by Ian Belton. $42. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 12/11 opening. • Henry Miller's Theatre, 124 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).

Cat's Paw

A new play and "meditation on the Don Juan theme" by the furiously inventive Mac Wellman (*Hypatia, Fnu Lnu*). $15. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30. Previews begin 12/15 for a 12/21 opening. • SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. (212-479-7979).

Pete 'n' Keely

A new musical comedy by James Hindman imagines a 1968 television special starring "America's Swinging Sweethearts," played by Sally Mayes and George Dvorsky. Mark Waldrop directs; Bob Mackie designed the costumes. $35–$55. Tues–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/14 opening. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

The Wax

Frank Wood, who won a Tony for his terrific, jittery performance in *Side Man*, stars with Mary Testa in Kathleen Tolan's new comedy about friends and midlife crises; Brian Kulick directs. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. Previews begin 12/12 for a 1/7 opening. • Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).

Now Playing

An American Family

To open its eighty-fifth season, Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre presents a historical drama by Miriam Kressyn set on the Lower East Side. $25–$37.50. Wed. and Thurs. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. Through 1/21. • Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).

American Rhapsody

A new musical revue of Gershwin's works. $40–$55. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Thurs. at 2, Sat. at 5 and 10:15, Sun. at 2. Through 12/31. • Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).

Baal

A bop-era adaptation, featuring a new translation by Peter Mellencamp. $15–$25. Wed.–Sat. at 10, Wed. at 8, Sat. at midnight. Through 12/16. • Flea, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

Blue Man Group: Tubes

Smart silliness. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened:

Opening

Men Might As Well Be *on* Mars

Downtown regular Mac Wellman is best known for the restless, inventive experimentation of ambitious works like *Hypatia* and *Fnu Lnu*. But for his new play **Cat's Paw**, subtitled *A Meditation on the Don Juan Theme*, he's been concentrating on love. "I thought this would be a kind of conventional *Don Juan* about seduction—a melodrama that's exciting and wonderful—but the emotions went to other places," Wellman (pictured, with cast) says. "It became very intimate and personal." Of course, his production won't be conventional at all. Inspired by a production of *Don Juan* that featured one man and 27 women, he says, "I thought I'd like to do a *Don Juan* and have no man at all, and make it a rule that the women don't even talk about men." These odd formal strictures have pushed Wellman to step back and look at our variety of strange animals mating in their natural environments. "We're so obsessed with sex on one level and horrified by it on another," Wellman says, that the conversations he overhears in "any bar where men and women are talking are kind of wonderful, but completely ridiculous and unbelievable." Wellman says he's learned to appreciate the humor and politics of romance, but also "how desperate people are for attention and love, and how ham-fisted people are about getting it." Of course, he adds, "my ideas on the subject are just as loony and demented as anyone else's; that's why I approached it." Previews begin December 15. (See "Off Broadway.") L.H.

Photograph by Paula Cort.

11/17/91. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

Book of the Dead (Second Avenue)
John Moran's new multimedia musical takes audience members on a "theme park ride" through the world's regions and religions. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Boys Don't Wear Lipstick
Brian Belovitch's solo show. $20–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Players Theatre, 115 Macdougal St. (212-239-6200).

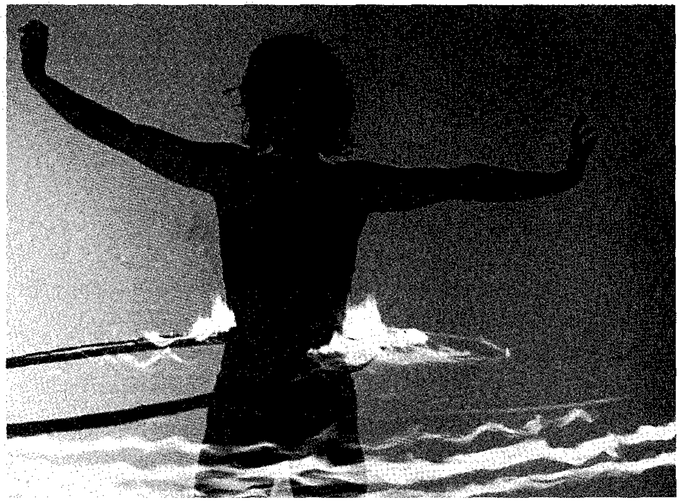
Brecht on Brecht
Irondale Ensemble presents a new work composed of the playwright's songs, poems, and prose. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/23. • Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave. (718-488-9233).

Cary and Gallo: What If We Did This?
Ted Sullivan directs the comic duo Cary and Gallo, in a production written by several late-night-television writers. $30. Mon. at 8. Through 1/22. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

Opening

Ring Cycle

With Barnum's Kaleidoscape, the Big Apple Circus, and now a bunch of flammable Aussies hurtling across the stage of the New Victory in **Circus Oz**, New York is ringed by three circuses. So if your children have an excess of pre-holiday adrenaline to burn, you have an excess of trapeze artists, clowns, stuntmen, and fire-eaters with which to entertain them. Just don't let them try this one (pictured, Kareena Oates) at home. (See "Off Broadway.")



Charles Bukowski's South of No North
The 29th Street Rep revives its successful spring adaptation of stories by the literary pubcrawler. $35. Wed.–Mon. at 8. • 29th Street Rep Theatre, 212 W. 29th St. (212-465-0575).

A Child's Garden
Melting Pot Theatre's new musical is based on the works and life of Robert Louis Stevenson. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 5. Through 1/14. • Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).

A Christmas Carol
Forget the Grinch. Madison Square Garden welcomes back its annual holiday extravaganza, directed by Susan Stroman and starring Frank Langella as Scrooge. $29–$65. Call for schedule. Through 12/31. • Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (212-307-7171).

Circus Oz
Kid-friendly Australian mayhem, featuring tightrope walkers, jugglers, trapezists, and more. $10–$35. Call for schedule. Through 1/14. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Cobb
Lee Blessing's suddenly timely play about the baseball icon transfers to Off Broadway. Joe Brancato directs. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30, Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 3:30. • Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (212-239-6200).

Comic Potential
When Alan Ayckbourn's new comedy wowed London last year, actress Janie Dee took home the Olivier, Evening Standard, and Critics Circle awards, for her portrayal of JC333, a robotic actoid hired by a struggling screenwriter. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

The Countess
Gregory Murphy's costume drama. $40–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. • Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Crave
Deborah Harry stars in Sarah Kane's disjointed drama. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/23. • Axis Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. (212-807-9300).

De La Guarda
A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

Dinner With Friends
Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show
A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Down the Garden Paths
Anne Meara's new comedy about four couples stars Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. Through 1/28. • Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Ln. (212-307-4100).

End of the World Party
A new comedy about gay men who share a Fire Island summer house by multiple Emmy winner Chuck Rangberg. $45. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • 47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

The Fantasticks
The musical perennial. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. • Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).

Fermat's Last Tango
A comic musical about mathematicians. $45–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 12/31. • Theatre at Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Ave. at 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey
Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof. $49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. • Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).

4 Guys Named José . . . and Una Mujer Named Maria
Four Latino guys fight to put together a song-and-dance revue that confounds stereotypes. $37.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. and Sat. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Fully Committed
For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).

Game Show
Director Mark Waldrop's cast will simulate a live TV broadcast and select audience members to compete for cash and prizes. Meanwhile, audience members who aren't competing onstage get to watch the hosts' backstage antics. $35–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. Through 12/23. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

The Gorey Details
A new musical revue based on the spooky stories of Edward Gorey. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Century Center, 111 E. 15 St. (212-239-6200).

Green Fields
Zypora Spaisman and Shifra Lerer star in the Yiddish classic. $18–$30. Wed. at 2 and 7, Thurs. at 7, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. Through 12/24. • Mazer Theater, 197 E. Broadway (212-279-4200).

The Hostage
The Irish Repertory presents Brendan Behan's dark comedy. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/31. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

The House of Bernarda Alba
The National Asian American Theatre Company presents a new production of Federico Garcia Lorca's all-female drama, adapted and directed by Chay Yew. $12–$19. Mon.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 7. Through 12/23. • Intar Theatre, 508 W. 53rd St. (718-623-1672).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Jesus Hopped the A Train
After a successful run at the LAByrinth Theater's this new play by Stephen Adly Guirgis (*In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings*) transfers for an Off Broadway stint. In its first production, John Ortiz (pictured), the talented co-founder of the LAByrinth Theater, gave a mesmerizing, intense performance as Angel Cruz, a Rikers Island prisoner who confronts a religious fanatic (Ron Cephas Jones) behind bars. $45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. • East 13th Street Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. (212-239-6200).

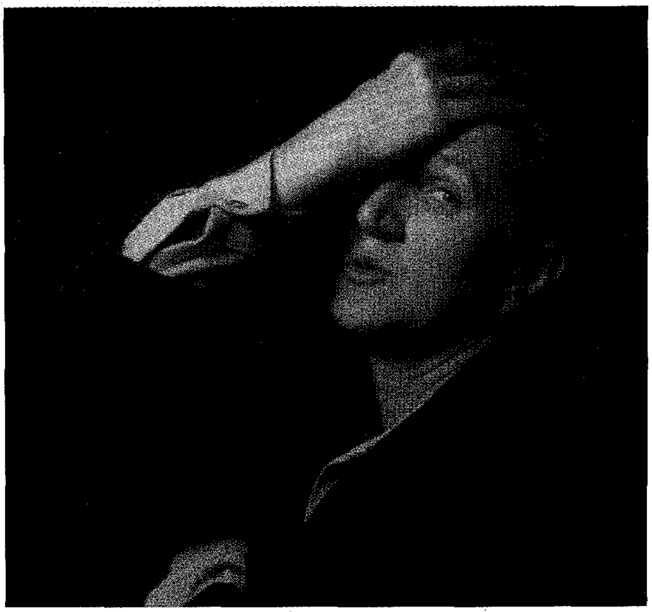
Jitney
In August Wilson's drama, the seventies are viewed through the goings-on in the office of a gypsy-cab company in Pittsburgh in 1977. It is so vividly written, acted, and directed (by Marion McClinton, a Wilson specialist) that it keeps you steadily amused, concerned, and moved. All performers are flawless. (Si-

Photograph by Poneh Hawkes.

Opening

Lady and Gentleman . . .

To celebrate twenty years of lesbian theater at La MaMa's W.O.W. Café, Obie regular and drag king Peggy Shaw (pictured), who's strutted as Stanley Kowalski, revives her production of **Menopausal Gentleman**. Among other things, she'll channel Screamin' Jay Hawkins and show off a very slick pinstripe suit. Maybe George Michael was wrong, after all: Sometimes, the clothes *do* make the man. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")



mon: 5/8/00.) $55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-505-0700).

Juno and the Paycock
Set during the Irish Civil War, Sean O'Casey's 1924 drama tracks a poor family living in a Dublin tenement who are informed of an inheritance, and drop cash like Puffy before learning, tragically, that their anticipated fortune is just a pittance. $55. Tues.–Sat at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 12/23. • Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900).

Kiki & Herb: Jesus Wept
If "All I Want For Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth" just makes you want to knock out the other thirty-two, this show's for you. Don't miss it. $15. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 7:30. Through 12/30. • Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Kit Marlowe
David Grimm's new biographical play about playwright Christopher Marlowe. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

The Last of the Thorntons
Pulitzer and Academy award-winning playwright Horton Foote revisits his often-visited fictional hometown, Harrison, to tell the tale of the last surviving member of the Thornton clan. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Signature Theatre's Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Late Night Catechism
Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school teaching nun. $40. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

The Light Outside
Kate Robin's new black comedy. $25. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/16. • Flea, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

Living in the Wind
Michael Bradford's new romantic drama about two former slaves. $30. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Lypsinka! The Boxed Set
Lypsinka is back. $35–$40. Wed.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/31. • Westbeth Theatre, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).

Maybe, Baby It's You
Playwright-performers Shari Simpson and Charlie Shanian play eleven couples in this romantic comedy. $40. Wed. at 2, Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 10. • Theater at St. Luke's, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Mother Lolita
A new play, set in Los Angeles, by Giullermo Reyes. $15–$25. Through 12/17. • Urban Stages, 259 W. 30th St. (212-755-0541).

Murdered by the Mob
Interactive off-line entertainment with a three-course dinner, door prizes, death, dancing, and acting awards for best audience participation. $55. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 7. • Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th St. (800-687-3374).

Naked Boys Singing
Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

Old Money
The prolific Wendy Wasserstein's new play. Mark Brokaw (*How I Learned to Drive*) directs. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Our Sinatra
Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes. $50–$80. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 7:30. • Reprise Room at Dylan's, 245 W. 54th (212-239-6200).

Patti LuPone's Matters of the Heart
LuPone in concert. Sun. and Mon. at 8. Through 12/17. • Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

A Place at the Table
Director Michael Sexton, who directed last year's terrific *Trudy Blue*, returns to the MCC with Simon Block's comical tale of television politics. $35. Tues. at 7, Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).

Princess Turandot
A prince and a princess meet and fall in love in Darko Tresnjak's new play, which mixes vaudeville, performance art, music, and more. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8. Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).

Richard III
Dan Daily plays Shakespeare's title role. $28–$35. • Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).

Sightseeing
Margaret Dulaney's new comedy tracks a television celebrity who tours Third World countries on a cruise ship. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/7. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Stomp
As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

Strictly Personal
A comedy about dating and personals by Jake Feinberg. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

Tabletop
Two Davids, Story and Mamet, have popularized the workplace play, a genre to which Rob Ackerman now contributes his highly estimable *Tabletop*. We are in the photographic studio of Marcus Gordon, a nervous perfectionist and slave driver wielding the foul-mouthed insult like a bullwhip. Needed, for a product called Fruit Freeze, is a "pour shot," to be followed by a "heroic beauty shot." Something always goes wrong: An apple gets bruised, that swirl collapses, tempers fray. Six terrific actors combine into an ensemble perhaps even greater than its parts. (Simon: 8/14/00.) $47.50. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Tallulah Hallelujah!
Tovah Feldshuh as Bankhead. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. at 2:30, and Sun. at 3. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Tiny Alice
Miss Alice, the richest woman in the world, returns, as Edward Albee's perversely strange 1965 mystery is revived in New York for the first time in 36 years. $40–$50. Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/24. • Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding
A wedding at St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St., then a reception at Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St., with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. $67.50–$80. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. • (212-239-6200).

The Trials of Martin Guerre
A new play by Frank Cossa. $15–$30. Sun., Mon., and Thurs. at 7, Sat. at 3 and 8. Through 12/17. • New 42nd Street Theater, 348 W. 42nd St. (212-666-6509).

The Unexpected Man
Parisian playwright Yasmina Reza's newest play employs just two actors—Alan Bates and Eileen Atkins—and requires just 75 minutes of your time. The estimable duo play a novelist and a devoted fan sitting across from one another on a train and speaking their inner monologues aloud. $60–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/31. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

The Vagina Monologues
Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc. Through 12/17: Lolita Davidovich, Sarah Jones, and Ann Magnuson. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Vieques
Set on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, this new drama tracks the life of a family in the fifties, as the United States began its military exercises. The playwright, Jorge González, is the winner of the 2000 Nuestras Voces playwriting contest. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Off-Off Broadway

The Ballad of Crappy and Seapole (According to Seapole)
Stanya Kahn's absurdist solo show. $15. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/17. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Chicago City Limits Turns 20
Celebrating twenty years of shtick. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • City Limits Theater, 1105 First Ave., near 60th St. (212-888-5233).

Photograph by Elizabeth Ohlson.

Christmas With the Crawfords
An angry, alcoholic recreation of Joan Crawford's notorious 1944 holiday radio broadcast. $30–$35. Tues–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10, Sun. at 7. Through 12/30. • Grove Street Playhouse, 15 Grove St. (212-212-879-5575).

A Cookie Korquie Christmas
Jeffrey Cridle and Michael Schloegl don their gay apparel. $20. 12/16–12/16 at 8. • Trilogy Theatre, 341 W. 44th St. (212-967-7711).

Dahling
Gareth Hendee directs the latest start-up in the burgeoning Tallulah Bankhead industry. A cast of eight revive the life of the raunchy lady. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8. • Grove Street Playhouse, 15 Grove St. (212-358-5812).

Erect for 30 Years
A solo show by the multitalented Glaswegian folk-singer, comedian, and actor. $35–$40. Through 12/16 at 8. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-691-2272).

Icarus
Edwin Sánchez's new play, about a man in a wheelchair and his sister. $20. Wed.–Sun. at 8. Through 12/23. • Bank Street Theatre, 155 Bank St. (212-353-3837).

Julius Caesar
The Aquila Theatre Company presents the classic, directed by Robert Richmond. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. Through 12/23. • Clark Studio, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza (212-279-4200).

Menopausal Gentleman
Peggy Shaw revives her Obie-winning show to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of La MaMa's W.O.W. Cafe. $15–$20. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 3. 12/14–12/23. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

The Merchant of Venice
Eve Adamson directs Shylock and friends. $24–$40. Thurs.–Sat. and some Weds. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/14. • Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Mirror Image
A solo show by Venezuelan actress Aminta De-Lara. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5:30. Through 12/17. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Monday Night Magic
Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, steal your watch, yank rabbits from hats, etc., all in an intimate setting. $25–$27.50. Mon. at 8. • Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-307-4100).

Mono
Steven Tannenbaum directs an inventive improvisatory play set in a bar-like environment, where fourteen characters act out all around. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. • Surf Reality, 172 Allen St. (212-358-3447).

Night and Day
In Tom Stoppard's comedy, journalists, an English colonialist, and a dictator clash in Africa. $20–$40. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3, some Weds. at 8. Through 3/22. • Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Oops! It's Christmas Again
Jackie Beat's holiday cheer. $15. 12/16 at 10 and midnight. • Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-212-462-9077).

The Reverend Billy Christmas Show
Bill Talen protests NYU's plans to demolish the Poe House with the Reverend Billy gospel choir. $10. 12/16 at 8. • Tishman Auditorium, 65 W. 12th St. (212-229-5488).

A Taste of Honey
Working Theatre presents Shelagh Delaney's play about a bookie, a prostitute, and their lovers. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/23. • Studio Theatre, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).

Times Square Angel
Charles Busch (*Vampire Lesbians of Sodom, Tale of the Allergist's Wife*) revives his classic forties take on a holiday special. $20. 12/17 at 2 and 4. • Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave. (212-254-1109).

cue Art

Edited by Edith Newhall

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Mary Cassatt
Drawings, monotypes, and aquatints by the American Impressionist that were discovered in a private collection in the mid-1970s; through 12/29. • Adelson, the Mark Hotel, 25 E. 77th St. (212-439-6800).

Tony Foster/Chris Gallagher
Watercolors painted on-site of Costa Rican rainforests, Bolivia's mile-high lakes, and other remote wilderness areas/Abstract paintings in which bands of color appear to undulate horizontally or vertically across a canvas. Through 1/13/01. • Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (212-535-5767).

Helen Frankenthaler
Madame Butterfly, a recent woodcut print made in collaboration with master printer Kenneth Tyler; through 1/6/01. • Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

John Marin
Paintings and watercolors by the American modernist (1870–1953) that display his unique device of framing or isolating imagery within his compositions; through 12/29. • York, 21 E. 65th St. (212-772-9155).

Joan Miró
An exhibition of sixteen large-scale paintings dating from 1968 to 1978, held in cooperation with the Foundacio Pilar I Joan Miró a Mallorca; through 1/6/01. • Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

Everett Shinn
Fifty of the Ashcan School painter's works depicting New York City streets and theater scenes; through 1/23/01. • Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. (212-744-2300).

Saul Steinberg
Works on paper and mixed-media constructions spanning the late fifties through the late eighties; through 1/13/01. • Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. (212-861-7338).

Cy Twombly
The artist's first New York show of new paintings in nearly 30 years; through 1/27/01. • Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

57th Street Area

Sue Coe
A new cycle of prints titled "The Tragedy War"; through 1/6/01. • St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734).

Tony Cragg
New sculptures in bronze, stone, polymer, and marble; through 12/30. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Richard Fleischner
Abstract gouache paintings on paper; through 1/6/01. • Danese, 41 E. 57th St. (212-223-2227).

Nancy Grossman
Assemblages, collages, and sculpture dating from the early 1960s to the present; through 1/13/01. • Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (212-247-0082).

Leslie Lerner
Painted tiles that continue the adventures of an imaginary character and his escape from Holland to Venice; through 1/7/01. • Littlejohn, 41 E. 57th St. (212-980-2323).

Sol LeWitt
New works, including a painted fiberglass sculpture, a series of gouaches, and one floor-to-ceiling acrylic wall drawing measuring 57 feet in length; through 2/23/01. • PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Gwynn Murrill
Bronze sculptures of Sika deer that were originally commissioned by the city of Obihiro, Japan; through 1/20/01. • Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

Kenneth Noland
New paintings of circles by this artist who emerged in the fifties as one of the leading exponents of the Color Field movement; through 1/20/01. • Ameringer Howard, 41 E. 57th St. (212-344-8420).

Fred Tomaselli
New paintings and drawings that incorporate photocopies of songbirds, pieces of maps, pills, leaves, and other materials; through 1/13/01. • Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

George Tooker/Ben Shahn
Egg-tempera paintings of figures in interiors and landscapes/Ink drawings on the themes of politics, the disenfranchised, and workers. Through 12/29. • DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-247-2111).

SoHo and TriBeCa

John Beerman/Willy Heeks
Recent paintings inspired by landscape and nature/Recent abstract works on paper. Through 1/13/01. • Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

David Bierk
Paintings that juxtapose images related to the contemporary fashion world with landscapes and still lifes evoking works by Fantin-Latour, Manet, Vermeer, and other masters; through 1/6/01. • Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Nanette Carter
Recent abstract paintings; through 1/2/01. • Kelly, 591 Broadway (212-226-1660).

Keith Haring
Paintings and objects by the late artist that reflect the spirit of the the Paradise Club, a gay dance club on the border of SoHo that was central to his world from the early eighties until it closed in 1987; 12/14–2/10/01. • Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Callum Innes
Recent abstract paintings in which a single oil color is brushed onto a canvas and then brushed away with turpentine, leaving only vestigial traces of pigment; through 1/20/01. • Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (212-343-2405).

Kevin Larmon
New paintings that evoke the presence of things unseen; through 1/6/01. • Marcus, 578 Broadway (212-226-3200).

Mary Lucier
Three new video installations; through 1/6/01. • Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Robert Moskowitz
Recent pastel drawings that continue the artist's signature motifs, such as Rodin's *The Thinker* and the World Trade Center, and one large-scale painting from 1996; through 2/3/01. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Marcel Odenbach/Henrik Olesen
A two-part video installation, *Herdentreib* (Herd Instinct), that depicts a herd of cows parading into and then exiting a highway tunnel/A site-specific installation. Through 1/13/01 (gallery will be closed 12/24–1/1/01). • Kern, 558 Broadway (212-965-1706).

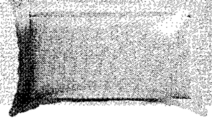
Dennis Oppenheim
A survey of the American conceptual artist's work of the past 30 years, including sculpture, installations, photo-documentations of earth and body works, and videos of body-art performances; through 2/28/01. • Ace, 275 Hudson St. (212-255-5599).

Ground Rules

Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

In Print

The Magnificent Seven

***They Called Her Styrene, Etc.*, by Ed Ruscha** Phaidon Press; $19.95	Sometimes words speak louder than actions, as in these 575 deadpan "word works" by the California artist dating from 1962 to 1999. Even better, the images are arranged in a book that's the size and shape of a small, thick block—perfect for stocking-stuffing.
***Kerry James Marshall*, text by Kerry James Marshall; essay by Terrie Sultan; conversation with Arthur Jafa** Abrams; $29.95	For the aspiring artist: a monograph that's not only brimming with reproductions of the MacArthur "genius" award-winner's lyrical collage paintings—inspired by art history and the African American experience—but with plainspoken, generous insights into them. Kerry James Marshall
***A Thousand Hounds*, edited by Raymond Merritt and Miles Barth** Taschen; $29.99	The best dog-picture book yet, featuring images from 1837 to the present by anonymous photographers, masters of the genre (Elliott Erwitt and William Wegman), and various other artistic fans of canines, among them Eric Fischl, Ralph Gibson, Man Ray, Picasso, and Wolfgang Tillmans.
***The Gilded Edge: The Art of the Frame*, compiled by Eli Wilner** Chronicle Books; $60.	Everything you'll ever want or need to know about frames and framing edited by the proprietor of New York's own Eli Wilner & Company, with essays by scholars, curators, collectors, and others.
***One Man's Eye: Photographs From the Alan Siegel Collection*, preface by Richard Sobieszek, commentaries by Alan Siegel** Abrams; $49.50	The chairman and CEO of Siegelgale, the global branding and e-strategy firm responsible for the NBA and 3M trademarks and the MTA MetroCard, holds forth on the eclectic collection that has overtaken his apartment and Rockefeller Center offices. Along with sports pictures and household names like Tina Barney, O. Winston Link, and Irving Penn, the collection boasts a large number of bizarre circus images. One Man's Eye Alan Siegel
***Atget*, by John Szarkowski** Museum of Modern Art/Callaway; $60	The most wanted photography volume of the season: sublime images of turn-of-the-century France by the French master accompanied by compulsively readable text by the former longtime director of MoMA's photography department.
Fresh Cream Phaidon Press; $49.95 	An artwork in its own right, the follow-up to 1998's *Cream* comes in a clear plastic inflatable pillow. Puncture the plastic, and you can read up on the 100 cutting-edge artists you're supposed to know—Doug Aitken, Ghada Amer, Vanessa Beecroft, Jason Dodge, Sarah Lucas, Barry McGee, Shazia Sikander, et al. Or leave it intact and preserve it as a time capsule.

Chelsea

Roger Ackling
Recent found-object sculptures; through 1/20/01. • Von Lintel & Nusser, 555 W. 25th St. (212-242-0599).

Siah Armajani
Glass Room, a transparent structure that incorporates many of the artist's familiar sculptural forms; through 1/6/01. • Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767).

Felix Gonzalez-Torres/Ashkan Sahihi
Two works by the late artist that have never been publicly exhibited: *Key West Weekend* (1989), a black-and-white puzzle of a bird that sits atop a Plexiglas pedestal, and *Untitled* (1995), a billboard displayed in the gallery and in 24 billboard locations throughout the city that depicts a bird in a vast sky/Portraits of people in extreme or irregular circumstances. Through 1/13/01. • Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Jan Henle
"Film drawings" dating from 1973 to 2000, related to the artist's monumental land sculptures and the earlier work from which they evolved; through 1/6/01. • Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Chris Johanson/Alicia McCarthy
Paintings by two Bay Area artists who used found materials, a simplified palette, and line to express human emotions; through 1/16/01. • RareArt, 435 W. 14th St. (212-645-5591).

Daren Kendall
Sculptures of trophies, digital drawings of Bible verses translated into numerical equations, and videos that comment on patterns of conformity in society; through 1/6/01. • Golden, 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

Lee Krasner
Gouache studies for two murals; through 1/6/01. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

June Leaf
New sculptures, drawings, and paintings of natural forms that appear to be in the process of transformation; through 1/13/01. • Thorp, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-6565).

Lance Letscher/Werner Schmidt
Works on paper by both; through 1/6/01. • Scott, 529 W. 20th St. (646-486-7004).

Jill Levine
A 25-year survey of the artist's painted wall sculptures; through 12/31. • Art Resources Transfer, Inc., 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956).

Sol LeWitt
Two new structures; through 1/6/01. • Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Tatsuo Miyajima
Video projections of digital numbers; 12/16–1/27/01. • Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (212-206-9100).

Hanno Otten
Photographic panels, hanging sculpture, and watercolors that refer to the history of color theory; through 1/6/01. • Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. (212-807-9494).

Jack Pierson
Photographs, sculptures, and drawings executed directly on the gallery's walls; through 1/6/01. • Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

Adrian Piper/Robert Wilson
The first segment of a five-part installment entitled "The Color Wheel Series, First Adhyasa: Annomayakosha," that integrates the spectrum of the Pantone system with tenets of Hindu Vedantic philosophy /Sculptures conceived for the artist's recent theatrical productions. Through 1/6/01. • Cooper, 521 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Alice Stepanek and Steven Maslin/Eric Freeman
Collaborative landscape paintings/Expressionistic paintings of abstracted floral forms. Through 1/13/01. • Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (212-352-1600).

Julianne Swartz/Bohnchang Koo
Glass sculptures suspended from the ceiling/Photographs of linear patterns in nature. Through 1/13/01. • Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (212-627-4819).

Thomas Trosch
Recent paintings that depict people in drawing rooms and boudoirs in New York and Connecticut circa 1965; through 1/6/01. • Fredericks Freiser, 504 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6555).

Fatimah Tuggar
Photomontages that mix images from Western advertising and contemporary life in Nigeria, and sculpture; through 1/6/01. • Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. (212-463-7770).

Mary Weatherford
New paintings; through 1/6/01. • Debs, 525 W. 26th St. (212-643-2070).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Werner
A series of fifteen monotypes from the late eighties and early nineties by the Danish artist Per Kirkeby and a selection of ancient South Arabian alabaster heads; through 1/20/01. • 4 E. 77th St. (212-988-1623).

57th Street Area

De Nagy
"Tibor de Nagy Gallery: The First Fifty Years," works by artists who have exhibited at this gallery since its founding in 1950, among them Blaine, Frankenthaler, Freilicher, Hartigan, Porter, Rivers, others; through 1/6/01. • 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

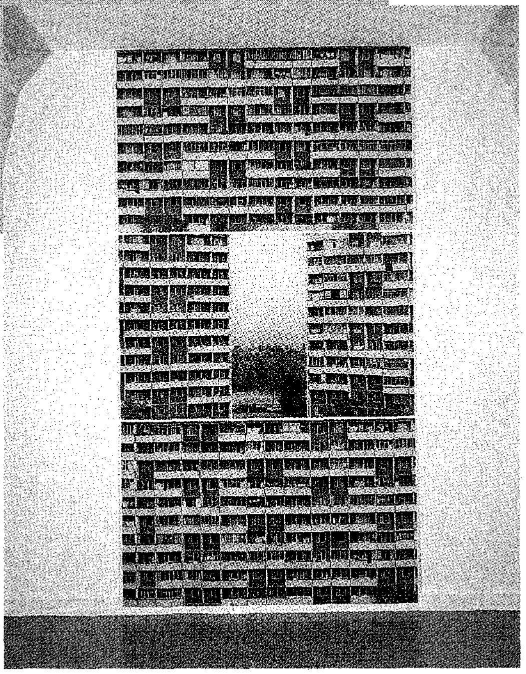
Helman
"Soft Core," sculptures dating from the early sixties to the present made with soft materials, by Allen, Boroson, Bourgeois, Christo, DeBellevue, Hamilton, Kusama, Morris, Oldenburg, Serra, others; 12/13–1/20/01. • 20 W. 57th St. (212-245-2888).

Marlborough
New sculpture by Martin Chirino; monumental sculptures by Hepworth, Lipchitz, Moore; through 1/6/01. • 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

Photography

City Sites

Since his last New York show, which consisted of color prints of construction sites in Berlin, Dresden, and Paris, the French photographer **Stephane Couturier** has found poetry in another urban eyesore. His recent multipanel photographs of high-rise apartment buildings in Seoul and Moscow (right, *Moscow*, Série "Monuments," No. 1, 1999) transform low-income housing into images of astonishingly Zen-like composure. At Laurence Miller Gallery, 20 West 57th Street; through December 23.



Photograph courtesy of Laurence Miller Gallery.

McGrath
Works on paper by Amato, Bakker, Graham, Hockney, Marden, Nauman, others; through 1/6/01. • 20 W. 57th St. (212-956-3366).

Perlow
Nonobjective works from the twenties through the forties by Bauer, Ferren, Greene, Rebay, plus figurative drawings of Berlin at night by Bauer from the twenties and thirties; through 1/6/01. • 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-7171).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Lehmann Maupin
"Figure in the Landscape," meditations on traditional subjects in the history of art by Dunham, Gaskell, Guston, Ritchie, Salle; through 1/13/01. • 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Thread Waxing Space
"Death Race 2000," works by 28 artists from Germany, England, and the United States that capture the spirit of the 1975 film directed by Paul Bartel and produced by Roger Corman that depicted an ironic version of the year 2000; through 1/13/01. • 476 Broadway (212-966-9520).

Chelsea

Alexander and Bonin
"Still," works in which quietness is an essential part of their content, by Balka, Bordo, Hatoum, Leonard, Plimack Mangold, Raetz, Salcedo; an assortment of accessories from Paul Etienne Lincoln's *Equestrian Opulator*; through 1/20/01. • 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

Audiello
"Neutopia," works that conjure Utopia by Ancalmo, Davis, Hoy, Schank, Vargas-Lugo; through 1/20/01. • 526 W. 26th St. (212-675-9082).

Feigen Contemporary
"Compression," works by Almog, Asymptote Architecture, Blair, Blake, Goldman, Grabner, Hendee; through 1/13/01. • 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Folin/Riva
"New Plasma," works by Allen, Baker, Bell, Lyon, Mitchell; through 1/6/01. • 529 W. 20th St. (212-242-3434).

Lombard-Freid
"Thrifting," works by seven emerging Texas-based artists who recycle objects and materials in their work; through 1/6/01. • 531 W. 26th St. (212-967-8040).

Photography

Benrubi
Photographs and monographs by gallery photographers Alpern, Baril, Parke-Harrison, Spencer, others; through 1/6/01. • 52 E. 76th St. (212-517-3766).

Marianne Courville
Photographic stills taken from home movies; through 1/01. • Fallon, 233 Broadway (212-699-9000).

David Duncan Douglas
Photographs of Picasso taken by the photojournalist between 1956 and 1973, the year the artist died; through 1/6/01. • Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-744-7400).

John Dugdale
Recent cyanotypes inspired by the poems of Walt Whitman; through 1/7/01. • Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (212-242-8811).

Wendy Ewald
Photographs that illustrate an alphabet built on the world and experiences of African-American students in Central Middle School in Cleveland, Ohio; through 1/30/01. • Scalo, 560 Broadway (212-334-9393).

ICP
"Reflections in a Glass Eye: Works From the International Center of Photography Collection"; "Annie Leibovitz: Women"; "Collected Visions: An Installation by Lorie Novak"; through 12/31. • 1133 Sixth Ave. (212-860-1777), Mon.–Wed. 10–5, Thurs. and Fri. 10–8 (5–8 voluntary contribution), Sat. and Sun. 10–6 (closed 12/25); $8.50, $6 students and seniors.

ICP Uptown
"Eugène Atget: The Pioneer." Photographs of turn-of-the-century Paris by the French photographer (1857–1927), drawn from several collections in France, accompanied by prints by Bill Brandt, Walker Evans, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Paul Strand, and other photographers influenced by Atget; through 1/21/01. • 1130 Fifth Ave. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8); $6, $4.

Mann
Photographs and photo-based artworks from the fall/winter issue of *Blind Spot* magazine, including works by Aitken, Armstrong, Hirst, Laplante, Marty, Rousse; 12/15–1/27/01. • 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-989-7600).

Kurt Markus
Photographs that explore cowboy life in the American West; 12/15–1/13/01. • Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (212-966-6223).

Javier Silva Meinel
Images that convey the artist's desire to connect himself with Peru's cultural past and present; through 1/6/01. • Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (212-223-1059).

Karin Appollonia Müller
Large-scale color photographs of urban Los Angeles and Western oceanside landscapes; 12/14–1/20/01. • Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-627-2410).

Newseum
"Women Photographers at National Geographic," works by women that were commissioned for the magazine between 1914 and the present; through 1/27/01 • 580 Madison Ave. (212-317-6500).

Annee Olofsson
New photographs and videos that depict scenes of contemporary life; through 1/2/01. • Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-680-9889).

Rubin • Greenberg Van Doren
"The Life of the Party," party pictures by Craig-Martin, Fink, Graham, Papageorge, Warhol, Winogrand; through 1/6/01. • 730 Fifth Ave. (212-445-0444).

Cindy Sherman
New color photographs that depict the artist as various women ravished by the entertainment industry; through 1/6/01. • Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100).

Julius Shulman
Photographs of houses designed by the modernist architect Richard Neutra; through 1/6/01. • Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-343-1255).

John Waters
Photographs of images from other director's movies shot directly from the TV screen; through 12/30. • American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. (212-941-0401).

Bruce Weber
New black-and-white photographs of children and adolescents; through 1/16/01. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Garry Winogrand
The first exhibition of work by this photographer (1928–1984) since his 1988 MOMA exhibition, comprising New York street scenes shot in the sixties and seventies; through 1/6/01. • Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

Winston Wächter Mayer
Photographs that celebrate figure and form in the city by Arnold, Bassman, Cartier-Bresson, Halsman, Klein, Leipzig, Zinneman, others; through 1/6/01. • 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

Museums

American Craft Museum

"Memories of Murano: American Glass Artists in Venice." Glass works made in Venice by Tina Marie Aufiero, James Carpenter, Dale Chihuly, Dan Dailey, William Prindle, Ginny Ruffner, Toots Zynsky, and other American glass artists who have been invited to work in the Venetian glass factory of Paolo Venini; through 1/7/01. • "Venetian Glass: 20th Century Italian Glass From the Olnick Spanu Collection." Works by Flavio Poli, Carlos Scarpa, Thomas Stearns, Paolo Venini, and other glass artists from the collection of Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu; through 1/7/01. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History

Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.-Thurs. 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society at Midtown

"Power and Desire: South Asian Paintings From the San Diego Museum of Art, Edwin Binney 3rd Collection." Paintings created under the patronage of rulers of South Asian courts between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; through 1/7/01. • 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-288-6400), Tues.-Sat. 10-6; Sun. noon-5. $4, $2 students and seniors (free Tues.-Fri. 12-2).

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts

"Women Designers in the U.S.A., 1900–2000: Diversity and Difference"; through 2/25/01. • 18 W. 86th St. (212-501-3000), Tues.-Sun. 11-5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Bronx Museum of the Arts

"Leonardo Drew." One new sculpture composed of two sections—one of cotton and the other of wood and found objects—and related drawings; through 3/4/01 • "Carlos Garaicoa: The Ruins, The Utopia." Drawing, photographs, and mixed-media and video installations by a Havana-based artist; through 3/4/01. • "Context: Mexico's Taller de Gráfica Popular and Its Legacy." Prints from the museum's permanent collection made by various members of the workshop; through 3/4/01. • 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3-9, Thurs. and Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 12-6; $3, $2 students and seniors, Wed. free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

"Nardo di Cione." An exhibition celebrating the reunion of the museum's Nardo di Cione altarpiece, *Madonna and Child Enthroned With Saints*, and its "lost" uppermost panel; through 2/18/01. • "Robots, Astronauts, and Space Toys: The Robert Lesser Collection." Almost 300 robots and space toys displayed with their original packaging; through 1/28/01. • "Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures From Ancient Ukraine." More than 170 articles of personal adornment, ceremony, and battle created by Scythian artists and Greek goldsmiths; through 1/21/01. • "Lee Krasner." The first full-scale retrospective of the American abstract painter since her death in 1984; through 1/7/01. • "Hip-Hop Nation: Roots, Rhymes, and Rage." An exhibition exploring the growth of hip-hop music through music, video, photography, clothing, and ephemera from its earliest stages through the present day; through 12/31. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11-6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

"The Opulent Eye of Alexander Girard." A retrospective of works by the mid-century American designer and architect (1907–1993); through 3/18/01. • "Masterpieces From the Vitra Design Museum: Furnishing the Modern Era." Furniture selected for its importance in the evolution of industrial furniture design; through 2/4/01. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts

"Panamarenko: *Orbit*." An exhibition pairing the Belgian artist's key work, *Aeromodeller*, an experimental flying machine built in 1969–71, with a work created this year; through 6/17/01. • "Bridget Riley: *Reconnaissance*." The British artist's seminal paintings from the sixties and seventies in which carefully calibrated geometric patterns seem to move rhythmically across a canvas; through 6/17/01. • "Jorge Pardo: *Project*." A transformation of the Dia Center's 6000-square-foot ground floor featuring colored ceramic tiles, mural paintings, glass dividers, stylish seating, increased natural light, and an expanded bookstore; through 6/17/01. • "Rodney Graham and Bruce Nauman: . . . *the nearest faraway place* . . ." New and earlier works by both artists that reflect their shared interests in the myth of the American West; through 6/17/01. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center

"Untitled Passages by Henri Michaux." The first museum exhibition in more than twenty years of drawings by the Belgian artist and poet (1899–1984); through 12/20. • "Adrienne Gallinari: Wall Drawings"; through 12/20. • 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection

"The Draftsman's Art: Master Drawings From the National Gallery of Scotland." Drawings by Da Vinci, Raphael, and other old masters, as well as works by Scottish artists; through 2/25/01. • "Raeburn's *The Reverend Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch*." Sir Henry Raeburn's celebrated skating minister on loan from the National Gallery of Scotland; through 1/21/01. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

"Ben Shahn's New York: The Photography of Modern Times." Photographs of New York City in the thirties by the Social Realist painter; through 1/27/01. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780); Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

"Giorgio Armani." The career of the fashion designer as seen through thematic groupings of his designs from the past 25 years; through 1/17/01. • "Amazons of the Avant-Garde: Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova, and Nadezhda Udaltsova." Paintings and works on paper by six Russian avante-garde women artists; through 1/7/01. • "Project for a New Guggenheim Museum in New York City." Architect Frank Gehry's preliminary plans and models for a new Guggenheim on the East River in lower Manhattan; through 4/21/01. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $8 students and seniors.

Japan Society

"Yes Yoko Ono." The first American retrospective of works by the avant-garde artist, including objects, installations, language pieces, films, photographs, music, and performance art dating from 1960 to the present; through 1/14/01. • 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.-Sun. 11-6; $5 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum

"Charlotte Salomon: Life? Or Theatre?" The first New York exhibit of gouaches by this artist (1917–1943), who drew on her own experience, and that of her family, in Nazi Germany; through 3/25/01. • "Morocco: Jews and Art in a Muslim Land." Decorative objects, artworks, costumes, and photographs documenting Jewish life in Morocco for the past 2,000 years; through 2/11/01. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45, Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5 pay what you wish); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

"A Century of Design, Part III: 1950–1975." The third in a four-part series of exhibitions surveying twentieth-century design in all media; through 4/1/01. • "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Crèche"; through 1/7/01. • "The Still Lifes of Evaristo Baschenis: The Music of Silence." Paintings by the seventeenth-century Italian artist known for his poetic still lifes of musical instruments; through 3/4/01. • "Rain From the Moon: Silver in Ancient Peru." Approximately 130 silver objects from private and public collections in the United States; through 4/22/01. • "The Golden Deer of Eurasia: Scythian and Sarmatian Treasures From the Russian Steppes." Works of gold and silver recently excavated at Filippovka in southern Russia, along with related Scythian, Sarmatian, and Siberian objects from the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; through 2/4/01. • "Romanticism and the School of Nature: Nineteenth-Century Drawings and Paintings From the Karen B. Cohen Collection." Works by Constable, Couture, Daubigny, Delacroix, Rousseau, others; through 1/21/01. • "The Year One: Art of the Ancient World, East and West." Works of art from Western Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, the Middle East, India, China, Southeast Asia, and the Americas from the museum's collections that were produced some 2,000 years ago; through 1/14/01. • "Queen Victoria and Thomas Sully." Oil portraits, wash drawings, and graphite sketches made between 1837 and 1838, when the artist was commissioned to paint the young queen; through 12/31. • "Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825–1861." Paintings, sculpture, architectural drawings, photographs, and decorative arts created in New York City, from the museum's own collections and from lenders in the United States and Europe; through 1/17/01. • "La Divine Comtesse: Photographs of the Countess de Castiglione." Photographs of the Countess de Castiglione, the mistress of Napoleon III and a great beauty of her day, that were taken by the photographer Pierre-Louis Pierson under her direction; through 12/31. • "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

"Ruskin's Italy, Ruskin's England." An exhibition commemorating the centenary of the death of the English critic, artist, and social commentator (1819–1900) through letters, diaries, sketchbooks, photographs, and other materials from the library's holdings; through 1/7/01. • "Collecting for Centuries: Anniversary Gifts." An exhibition honoring the library's 75th anniversary as a public institution and the 50th anniversary of the Association of Fellows, including more than 100 works received by and promised to the library; through 1/7/01. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. 12-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio

"Latin American Artist-Photographers From the Lehigh University Art Galleries Collection." More than 100 photographs by 50 modern and contemporary Latin American and Latino artists drawn from the permanent collection of the Lehigh University Art Galleries, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; through 1/14/01. • 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.-Sun. 11-5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art

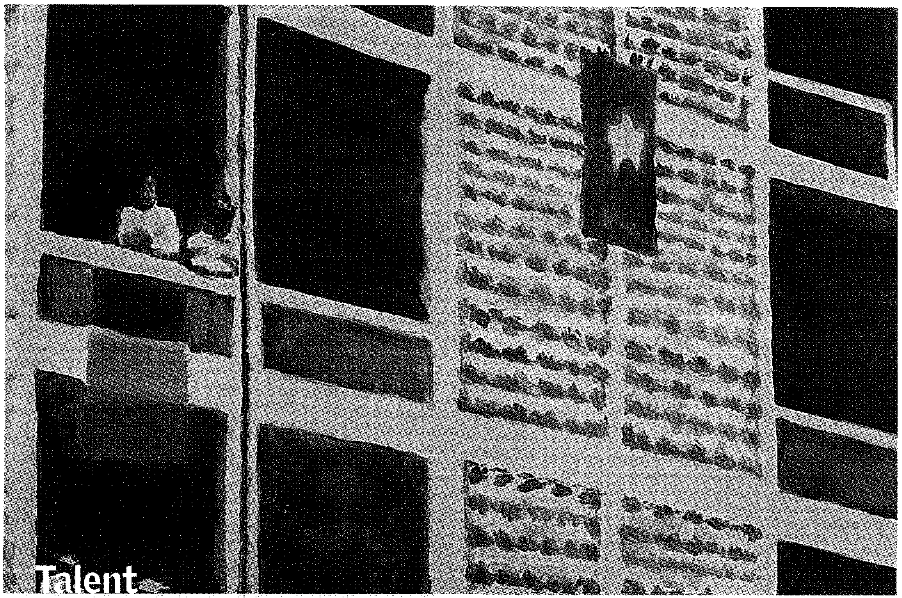
"In the Presence of Spirits: African Art From the National Museum of Ethnology, Lisbon." Artworks from Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau; through 12/31. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12-6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art

"An Engagement With Folk Art, Cyril I. Nelson's Gifts to the Museum." Quilts, textiles, coverlets, painted and decorated furniture, paintings, and other works given to the museum by one of its trustees; through 1/7/01. • Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.-Sun. 11:30-7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art

"MOMA 2000: Open Ends." An exhibition comprising approximately twelve separate exhibitions of the museum's acquisitions in all media since 1960, including paintings, sculpture, photography, video, design, and architectural drawings and models; through 1/20/01...."Collection Highlights." More than 45 masterworks from the museum's permanent collec-



Talent

Congo Line

Catch a preview of one of next year's Venice Biennale exhibitors in SoHo. The Belgian artist **Luc Tuymans**, who'll be representing his country in 2001, is showing his paintings from the series "Mwana Kitoko. beautiful white man" (above, *Leopoldville*, 2000), which gives the artist's account of the strange—let's make that murderous—politics behind the colonization of the Belgian Congo (later Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). They'll form the core of the Belgium pavilion. At David Zwirner, 43 Greene Street; through December 23.

tion of painting and sculpture; through 1/28/01. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"Guys & Dolls: The Fabled Musical of Broadway." Scene designs, costumes, photographs, and ephemera drawn from the archives of composer Frank Loesser and playwright Abe Burrows that reveal how they turned the Damon Runyon story, "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown" into the 1950 hit musical; through 6/10/01. • "The City Shops: Photographs by Martha Cooper and Fred W. McDarrah." Images from the sixties to the present documenting shops in New York City neighborhoods; through 4/15/01. • "A Portrait of Paris: Eugène Atget at Work." Images of architecture in Paris at the turn of the last century, taken by the French photographer during the last two decades of his life; through 2/4/01. • "Life of the People: Realist Prints and Drawings From the Ben and Beatrice Rose Collection, 1912–1948"; through 1/14/01. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology

"Perry Ellis." Fourteen of the designer's outfits that were donated to the museum by the Perry Ellis Morphos Collection; through 1/13/01. • "A Woman's Hand: Designing Textiles in America, 1945–1969." Printed, woven, and knitted textiles for interiors and apparel by more than 40 women designers; through 1/13/01. • "Bonnie Cashin, Practical Dreamer." An exhibition paying tribute to the American clothing designer through designs, childhood and professional sketches, photographs, and ephemera; through 1/6/01. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. 12-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design

"Rave Reviews: American Art and Its Critics, 1826–1925." An exhibition examining the Academy's role in shaping the formation of American art criticism, with paintings by Bellows, Cole, Eakins, Hassam, Homer, Sargent, and others; through 12/31. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs.12-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

"Pierre et Gilles." Hand-painted photographs from the past two decades by the French collaborative team; through 1/7/01. • "Adrian Piper: A Retrospective and MEDI(t)Ations." Objects, installations, performances, videos, and soundworks by the artist known for her identity-based works; through 1/21/01. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12-6, Thurs.-Sat. 12-8 (free Thurs. 6-8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library

"Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World." A collaborative exhibition between the NYPL and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France featuring works from both institutions' collections on the theme of utopia; through 1/27/01. • "Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30/01. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089); Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free

New-York Historical Society

"Eye of the Storm: The Civil War Drawings of Robert Knox Sneden." Watercolors, maps, and drawings depicting Robert K. Sneden's experience as a soldier in a New York regiment of the Army of the Potomac, as a Union map-maker, and as a prisoner of war in some of the worst Confederate prisons; through 12/31. • "Elder Grace: The Nobility of Aging." Photographs of 80 African-American women and men by Chester Higgins, Jr.; through 3/4/01. • "Intimate Friends: Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, William Cullen Bryant." Paintings, manuscripts, and periodicals relating to Cole and Durand, founders of the Hudson River School, and their poet-editor friend; through 2/4/01. • "Inventing the Skyline: The Architecture of Cass Gilbert." Sketches, presentation drawings, letters, and other materials from the society's collection; through 1/21/01. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center

"Disasters of War: Works by Francisco de Goya, Henry Darger, and Jake and Dinos Chapman." Works that mediate horrific historical events; through 2/25/01. • "Georges Adéagbo: *Abraham—L'ami de Dieu*." Installations by a West African artist that combine paintings, sculptures, books, hand-written texts, photographs, newspaper articles, and objects; through 3/29/01. • "John Wesley." The first U.S. retrospective of works by this painter known for his palette of pinks and baby blues, his use of painted "frames" within his pictures, and his combinations of emblems, historical and comic-book figures, animals, and sexy women; through 1/15/01 • "Santiago Sierra." A sculpture and performance work by a Mexico-based artist; through 1/15/01. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art

"Seductions and Games: Recent Video Installations by Maureen Connor." The first American survey of the artist's interactive-media production; through 1/28/01. • "Tiffany Behind the Glass." An exhibition focusing on the construction, manufacture, marketing, and conservation of lamp and window production; through 2/4/01. • New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 12-5; $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem

"Whitfield Lovell: Whispers From the Walls." A mixed-media installation inspired by the forced removal of a thriving African-American community in Denton, Texas, in 1921; through 12/31. • "Isaac Julien: Vagabondia." A video installation by a British filmmaker that is his response to the Sir John Soane Museum in London, which houses an eccentric collection of antiquities; through 1/7/01. • "Martin Puryear: The *Cane* Project." A series of woodblock prints by the sculptor that were inspired by Harlem Renaissance writer Jean Toomer's classic novel, *Cane*; through 1/7/01. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed. and Thurs. 12-6, Fri. 12-8, Sat. and Sun. 12-6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art

"Sol LeWitt: Retrospective." A survey of the artist's wall drawings, structures, photographs, and works on paper from the past 40 years; through 2/25/01. • "Edward Steichen." A retrospective of the photographer's work including nearly 200 vintage prints as well as rarely seen examples of his work as a painter, designer of textiles, and curator of exhibitions; through 2/4/01. • "Roni Horn: Still Water (The River Thames, for Example." A piece comprising fifteen photographic images, printed as lithographs, of the surface of the River Thames; through 1/14/01. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri 1-9 (pay what you wish every Fri. 6-9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris

"Sowon Kwon: Two or Three Corridors." A site-specific installation of artworks chosen by the artist from the private hallways of Philip Morris Companies Inc.'s international headquarters; through 1/5/01. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's

12/13 at 10 and 2: "Rugs." On view from 12/9. 12/14 at 10 and 2: "Books." On view from 12/9. 12/14 at 6:30: "Gold Rush Treasures From the SS Central America." On view from 12/11. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

Doyle

12/13 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations and Paintings." On view from 12/9. 12/13 at 4: "Holiday Gifts." On view from 12/9. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's

12/13 at 10:15 and 2: "Books." On view from 12/7. 12/14 at 10:15 and 2: "Coins." On view from 12/8. 12/15 at 10:15 and 2: "Rugs." On view from 12/9. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries

12/14 at 10:30: "Maps and Atlases and Decorative Graphics." On view from 12/9. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

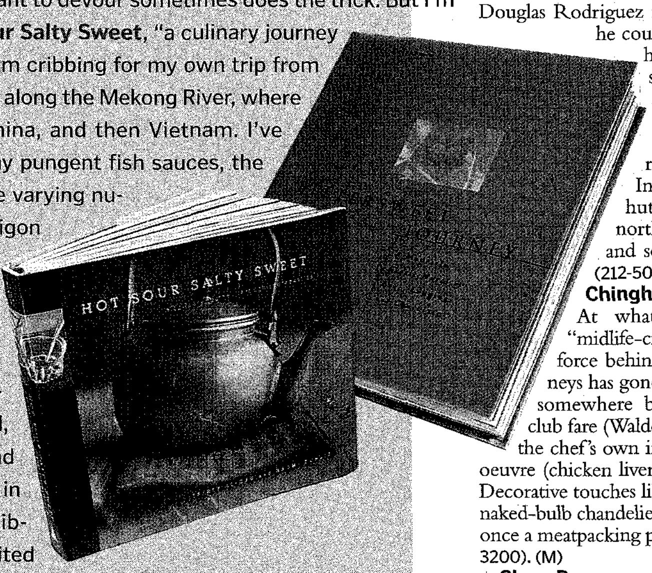
Photograph courtesy of David Zwirner.

Restaurants

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

Ask Gael

I need a gift for a gourmand who's on a diet.



For me, a book with evocative pictures I want to devour sometimes does the trick. But I'm not just teasing my cravings with **Hot Sour Salty Sweet**, "a culinary journey through Southeast Asia" (Artisan; $40). I'm cribbing for my own trip from Jeffrey Alford and Naomi Duguid's journey along the Mekong River, where it touches Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, China, and then Vietnam. I've made a list of their village finds, the many pungent fish sauces, the soups I want to try. And I'll be digging the varying nuances of street food as we move from Saigon to Phnom Penh. I also just found a journey of quite another sort lost in a pile of books under my desk—**Bittersweet Journey** by Enid Futterman. "A modestly erotic novel of love, longing, and chocolate," the cover purrs too modestly. Indeed, this is erotica for the sensuous woman and the chocoholic. (Out of print, alas, but still in a few bookstores, and there's always alibris.com.) In a wonderfully weird, uninhibited stream of whimsy, memory, and hunger, the seemingly insatiable Charlotte roams the world in search of love and chocolate—her two obsessions ultimately tangling in the bedclothes. Hershey bars at midnight. Chocolate in champagne glasses. By the way, **Buttery Almond Toffee Crunch** from New Paltz at Vintage (482 Broome; 226-9463) may not cure nymphomania or the cocoa-tremens, but it's a scrumptious distraction.

New and Noteworthy

★ AZ
If you think pan-Asian fusion is so last decade, make haste to the Flatiron triplex that used to be Flowers, remade with a glass elevator and retractable roof and now home to chef Patricia Yeo and her inspired culinary inventions. What works? A trio of sensational chutneys on Indian flatbread, and lapsang souchon-smoked quail with scallion pancakes, for starters. A street-level lounge caters to lighter appetites. • 21 W. 17th St. (212-691-8888). (E)

★ Baldoria
Frank Pellegrino Jr.'s father earned the nickname Frankie No after years of politely declining requests for reservations at Rao's, his ten-table East Harlem celebrity hangout. Junior offers better odds in the theater district: 136 seats, plus a raw bar upstairs. A fugitive from Felidia's posh kitchen adds some verve to the home-style Neapolitan seafood salad and roasted peppers Pellegrino borrowed from his dad uptown. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

★ Bar Demi
Verbena's Diane Forley named this twelve-seat wine shrine for its half-address and devotion to hard-to-find half bottles. Then she challenged sommelier Aaron von Rock to match appropriate wines with her ever-so-dainty "tiers" of flavor-packed finger food. Order the Pinot Noir package, for instance, and share ethereal foie gras mousse, grilled baby lamb chops, and Von Rock's Pinot of choice. Or flex your own wine-pairing muscles and order a la carte. • 125 1/2 E. 17th St. (212-260-0900). (M)

★ Blue Hill
Alex Urena's seasonal American menu draws on his cooking tour of France and Spain, which is where he picked up the haute habit of garnishing food with foam (to wit: a delicious asparagus soup with Parmesan froth). But despite a certain culinary trendiness, the atmosphere couldn't be more congenial or the service less pretentious. The room is pretty, too, comfortable and sophisticated, and the three-sided limestone bar accommodates diners and drinkers alike. • 75 Washington Pl. (212-539-1776). (M–E)

★ Brasserie
Nostalgists may have wished for a clone of the original Brasserie. This ain't it. But the redesign is stunning and the big-brother video screens make as much of your entrance as those bygone steps used to. The classic French food (think onion soup, duck cassoulet, mandatory beignets) is satisfying and served nearly continuously from breakfast through late night—a welcome anomaly in this otherwise early-to-bed precinct. • 100 E. 53rd St. (212-751-4840). (M–E)

★ Brasserie 8 1/2
At this souped-up designer bookend to the newly modish Brasserie, you get big brasserie dishes plus a pumpkin-carpeted-diva staircase entrance, and two subterranean, airport lounge style bars. The simpler menu choices tend to be better, like the frisée salad and the cornflake-crusted crab cakes. The evening scene is overcooked, but lunch at bar No. 2 (the blue green one) is better. • 9 W. 57th St. (212-829-0812). (M–E)

★ Caffé La Grolla
The itty-bitty offshoot of Ristorante La Grolla performs three essential functions: It accommodates 28 extra bodies; it provides a more casual, late-night alternative to its popular parent; and it delivers. The menu's an appealing mix of La Grolla classics its regulars can't live without (veal scallopine, scrumptious artichokes) and brand-new dishes like supernally moist roasted pork loin and Neapolitan-style pizzas. • 411A Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-579-9200). (I–M)

★ Chicama
Douglas Rodriguez is so disarmingly inventive that he could serve his spectacular seviches, his drippingly seductive goat stew, and his daunting, did-Mom-ever-make-it-like-this? suckling pig from a lean-to in Union Square and there'd be no room left for the other vendors. Instead, he inhabits a rustic dream hut that takes you somewhere north of Brazil, east of Mardi Gras, and south of Heaven. • 35 E. 18th St. (212-505-2233). (M–E)

Chinghalle
At what Mark Strausman calls his "midlife-crisis restaurant," the indefatigable force behind Campagna and Fred's at Barneys has gone off in a newish food direction, somewhere between *Thin Man*-era supper club fare (Waldorf crab salad, London broil) and the chef's own intensely satisfying Jewish-Italian oeuvre (chicken livers sautéed in port, grilled pizza). Decorative touches like Belgian train-seat booths and naked-bulb chandeliers suit the artfully aged premises, once a meatpacking plant. • 50 Gansevoort St. (212-242-3200). (M)

★ Chow Bar
Chef-partner Peter Klein started out cooking at China Grill and El Teddy's, then parlayed that spicy Chino-Latino experience into a lucrative cross-country consulting gig. Luckily for us, he's settled down in the West Village, where's he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively bar crowd, which seems ecstatic to finally find a quasi-exotic neighborhood place to call its own. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

Commune
If you're envisioning a vegan paradise of skinny hippies in millet-dusted overalls, think again. In fact, think dark, loud, and populated by a scantily clad clientele that tends to congregate around the onyx bar and communal table. Co-owner Matthew Kenney takes the same comfort-food tack as at his other downtown hot spot, Canteen, except here the macaroni and cheese is truffled. • 12 E. 22nd St. (212-777-2600). (M)

Ground Rules

These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations, either for outstanding overall quality or in recognition of at least one exceptional feature, and are usually awarded after the restaurant has been formally reviewed. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: **(E)** = expensive; **(M)** = moderate; **(I)** = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; **($)** = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

Photographs by Joe Scafuro.

The Underground Gourmet

Gambling on New Business

When Michelle Nolan and her fiancé, Carlo Pulixi, were prowling through Brooklyn looking for a restaurant space, they discovered a Park Slope storefront with an intriguing past. "We found peepholes drilled into walls and secret compartments everywhere," explains Nolan, who says that the former shoe store was also a front for a numbers-running operation. "And we had to pay a squatter living in the basement $1,000 to leave." In November, after almost nine months of stripping paint, laying brick, installing a kitchen, and banishing ghosts, the couple opened **Convivium Osteria**, a brand-new Mediterranean restaurant that manages to look old—or at least artfully aged. Nolam and Pulixi bought an upstate barn as a source for weathered wood, which Pulixi turned into rustic farmhouse tables; then, for the full country effect, they decked the walls with cross saws, cattle brands, and a few farm implements that look like they came out of the pawnshop scene in *Pulp Fiction*. Chef Fernando Exteverri's food is Old World, too—a cohesive medley of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese dishes, the name of each spelled in its respective language on the menu and translated by the multilingual Nolan. Everything is served on hand-shaped Italian ceramic plates, and you might want to hog a table big enough to accommodate several. Start with marinated anchovies and roasted peppers, or grilled sardines over toasted garlic bread. Jumbo artichoke hearts sit in a puddle of sauce so deeply flavored with garlic, cubes of guanciale, peperoncino, and white wine you won't want to relinquish the plate until you wipe it clean. On the off chance that you don't fill up on appetizers, share an entrée like the luscious pignoli-crusted baby rack of lamb or the sliced black-Angus steak "para dos." Or just savor dessert: a honey-slathered wedge of grilled Sardinian pecorino, a dish worthy of those handsome plates. (68 Fifth Avenue, near Bergen Street, Brooklyn; 718-857-1833.) R.P.

★ Del Frisco's
Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbanely elegant steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. Now if they can only figure out how to get their staff up to the level of their surroundings and kitchen. The place is New York landmark potential. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

★ The Dining Room
You know how you love cooking those intimate dinners at home for just you and your close friends? Oh, you don't. Well then don't you wish you were at one? This scrumptious example of turning lemons into lemon soufflé not only transforms an awkward layout into a series of cozy hideaways but it gets you all warm and snuggly with hearty American cuisine that surprisingly weighs less than the conversations around it. • 154 E. 79th St. (212-327-2500). (M-E)

District
At this new hotel restaurant, David Rockwell's design makes playful reference to the theater-district locale, and Sam DeMarco's menus make mouthwatering reference to the fun, original food he popularized downtown at First. For breakfast, there's the Scramble (smoked salmon, cream-cheese fondue, latkes, and dill-caper gremolata). For lunch, "double features" like potato pierogi with a brisket sandwich. Plus a $28 pre-theater dinner and a late-night "mini-bar." • 130 W. 46th St. (212-485-2999). (M)

★ Esca
Somewhere in between overseeing Babbo and Lupa, taping his cooking show, and just basking in the glory of his own undeniable greatness, Mario Batali has found time to earn another gastronomic gold star. At Esca, the overachiever in the orange clogs, partner Joe Bastianich, and chef David Pasternack do for Southern Italian seafood what Le Bernardin has done for French: The poured concrete bar with a built-in conduit for ice and oysters is an inspired take on raw-shellfish service; crudo (think Italian sashimi) is incredibly fresh and of the highest quality; pastas like spaghetti with fresh chiles, mint, and a one-pound lobster are irresistible. And the whole fish for two, roasted in a sea-salt crust that's cracked tableside, is a riveting performance worthy of the theater-district locale. • 402 W. 43rd St. (212-564-7272). (M-E)

★ 44 & X Hell's Kitchen
John Tesar's inspired new American cooking packs this handsome room nightly with Hell's Kitchen locals and clued-in theatergoers, happy to find such good food and friendly service this far west. After feeding Wall Street warriors downtown at Vine, Tesar's traded in some of his fancier flourishes for a renewed focus on down-home dishes like rich and gooey mac-and-cheese, crispy buttermilk fried chicken and chive waffles, and individual meat loaf swathed in tomato sauce. • 622 Tenth Ave. at 44th St. (212-977-1170). (M-E)

★ Gnocco Caffe
Co-owner Pierluigi Palazzo named this East Village café after the traditional Modenese snack of crispy, puffy fried dough, usually served with prosciutto di Parma. But just to complicate matters, the gently-priced menu also offers two versions of gnocchetti (an entirely different, equally delicious thing), plus well-dressed, unusually fresh salads and an unassuming pork tenderloin lavished with Parmigiano-Reggiano shavings and an aged-balsamic emulsion. • 337 E. 10th St. (212-677-1913). (I)

★ Guastavino's
They could serve tuna casserole and you'd still be in awe of one of the most spectacular restorations of a neglected urban space. Don't worry. It's ok to drop your jaw at the first sight of the towering Alhambran arches. Everybody does. Though you may not be as impressed with what's put in front of you, Guastavino's is one of those massive undertakings that may take a long time to get things right. In the meantime, enjoy the scenery. • 409 E. 59th St. (212-980-2455). (M-E)

Le Zinc
Once you open a place like Chanterelle, where do you go from *there?* If you're Karen and David Waltuck, you head two blocks south and two blocks east to open a casual bistro—the perfect spot to unwind after a long night shaving truffles. With a few Asian exceptions, the menu reads like the homespun work of someone who's sown his wild *hautes*: assorted charcuterie, steak-frites, Provençal fish stew, "Grandma's Szeged goulash." A burger, even. And nothing over $19. • 139 Duane St. (212-513-0001). (I-M)

★ Los Dos Molinos
Not since Drew flashed Dave has Manhattan witnessed a hotter display than the one at Los Dos Molinos—the Union Square branch of the popular Arizona restaurant. The slow, satisfying burn begins with chips and fiery salsa and continues with familiar but superlative Mexican-American fare. Entrées like irresistibly hot "adovada" pork ribs come with rice and beans, a good homemade flour tortilla, and an apology in advance printed on the menu: "Sorry we do not provide a mild sauce, I do not know how to make 'mild,' " reads the chef's mission statement–indemnity clause. • 119 E. 18th St. (212-505-1574). (I-M)

★ Lotus
Everything you wanted from a trendy club-bar-restaurant and less. Less attitude, less discomfort, less elbow contact, and less forgettable food. Lotus is a blooming surprise. A slight kitchiness keeps it warm. Nice guy owners keep it friendly. And chef Richard Farnabe keeps you well fed. Think of the velvet rope outside as a ribbon. And Lotus as a gift. • 409 W. 14th St. (212-243-4420). (M-E)

★ Macelleria
Vegetarians beware: The name is Italian for "butcher shop," which the cozy back room still resembles, and the space used to be a meat locker. But there's much more to chef Jeffrey Edwards's menu than his dry-aged porterhouse for two. Whole peppercorns enliven

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

Gorgonzola salad dressing. Zesty fennel sausages adorn a cannelini-bean stew. Delectable pastas are served with hearty ragus, perfect for fall. • 48 Gansevoort St. (212-741-2555). (M)

★ Mangiarini
There may be more Italian restaurants on the Upper East Side than there are cannoli on Mulberry Street, but few as bare-boned chic as this one. The designer of the Calvin Klein boutique went commensurately minimalist at this narrow 30-seater, where spaghetti with lemon and basil and sandwiches like prosciutto and melted goat cheese on semolina flatbread are as stylishly stripped down as the décor. • 1593 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-734-5500). (I)

★ Mardi Gras Pizza
A *not-so-subtle Two Boots knockoff right* down to the cornmeal crust, spicy tomato sauce, and crayfish toppings, but who cares? This festive little joint's pies are light; the crust is crisp—though it could be thinner—and toppings like andouille and tasso add a fiery Cajun kick. And they didn't even call it Famous Original Two Boots or Two Boots Too! • 3-7 Maiden Ln. (212-233-6066). (I)

★ Merge
Chef Sam DeMarco and his partners have a knack for creating neighborhood restaurants good enough to leave your neighborhood for. At Merge, in the former Indigo space, they've done it again. A cool, comfortable room, a friendly staff, a festive mood, signature "tiny tini" cocktails, and DeMarco's inspired multiculti neo-American cooking are an irresistible draw for locals as well as interlopers. Sunday evenings, "Gino's *Soprano* Style Dinner," a $25 prix fixe Italian-American feast, is an absolute steal. • 142 W. 10th St. (212-691-7757). (M) AE only.

★ Mombar
An artist at heart, chef-owner Moustafa El Sayed designed and built this sort of Alice-in-Arabian-Wonderland dedicated to Egyptian clay-pot cookery, where teacups protrude from walls, and tabletops double as canvases for his surrealistic visions. And El Sayed is as creative with food as he is with paint and tile; his menu changes daily, depending on the season and the market. Try the meze plate, or the egga, a sort of Egyptian frittata, and then move on to El Sayed's raison d'être, the all-encompassing clay pot, which on any given night might be filled with stewed rabbit, lamb tagine, or chicken and olives. • 25-22 Steinway St. (718-726-2356). (M)

Neo
If you've ever wondered how sushi would taste enhanced by condiments other than wasabi and soy sauce, this is the place to find out. Chef Steve Wong, also known as Neo, has concocted over 60 sauces to compliment his sushi, from tofu to onion aioli. Plus inventive Japanese fusion dishes, tempura, and a raw bar. • 2298 Broadway, nr. 83rd St. (212-769-1003). (M-E)

Nick & Stef's Steakhouse
Los Angeles chef Joachim Splichal opened the first branch of this steakhouse in his hometown, knowing it might play even better in red-meat-loving Manhattan. There's twelve of everything, from salads and starters to potatoes and sauces. And where's the beef? Front and center, hung out to dry in a steel-and-glass aging chamber. • 9 Penn Plaza (212-563-4444). (M-E)

★ Peasant
Peasant is exactly right. From its stunningly backlit brick-walled kitchen that features only open-fire cooking to its incredibly appealing Tuscan menu, chef-owner Frank De Carlo has reason to bust his buttons every night, and you have almost too many reasons to undo a couple of yours. And thanks to some recent soundproofing, you no longer need to shout to get your share of impeccably al dente pastas, and meltingly tender osso buco in a risottolike nest of farro. • 194 Elizabeth St. (212-965-9511). (M)

★ Pipa
Doug Rodriguez has done Nuevo Latino at Patria and Chicama. Now he's tackling old-world Spanish (sort of). A field trip to Galicia yielded dozens of recipes for tapas, casseroles, soups, and flatbreads, all

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of which undergo subtle and delicious transformation in the chef's inventive hands. To wit: bocarones in escabeche with almond-crusted queso de cabra, crispy anchovies wrapped in sage leaves, and churros with warm chocolate dipping sauce for dessert. Much more radical is the conversion of the old Parlour Cafe into a seductive Iberian oasis with serrano ham hanging from beams and walls studded with enough shells to stock Sanibel Island. • 38 E. 19th St. (212-677-2233). (M)

★ **Quartino**

All that separates this rustic Italian paninoteca and wine bar from the South Street Seaport is a few short blocks and one major mind-set. It's all about the good life, Italian-style, which of course involves wine, served by the mini-carafe; delectable cured meats and imported cheeses; strong espresso; and convivial conversation. But amazingly, no smoking. The owners may be Italian, but they're also (with one or two exceptions) doctors. • 21 Peck Slip (212-349-4433). (I)

★ **Rhône**

The owners of this former meatpacking-district garage are erstwhile sommeliers with a thing for the Rhone Valley. If you've ever wondered about the difference between a Côte Rotie and a Côtes du Rhône-Villages, this is the place to find out, to the accompaniment of Gramercy Tavern alum Payson Dennis's sophisticated French country cooking. Splurge on lobster-truffle salad or sea bass served with oxtail ragout, or just mellow out at the enormous walnut bar or on a low-slung fifties-era Artifort chair in the lounge area. • 63 Gansevoort St. (212-367-8440). (M-E)

Rosa Mexicano at Lincoln Center

This hyper designed offshoot of Josefina Howard's upscale Mexican restaurant features a floating terazzo staircase ascending a dramatic 40-foot water wall. Not to be upstaged, the signature made-to-order guacamole has survived the commute, as have the pomegranate margaritas. And chef Sergio Remolina has made his own mark with assorted seviches and chile-spiced lamb shank steamed in parchment. • 61 Columbus Ave, at 62nd St. (212-977-7700). (M-E)

★ **Rose Water**

Chef-partner Neil O'Malley used to work at Oznot's Dish in Williamsburg, and it shows in his meze platter and lamb brik. But his tenure at Savoy, where he met partner John Tucker, is equally conspicuous. The menu's seasonal fixation guarantees a harvest of white-lightning corn and heirloom tomatoes in the summer. But the careful service, Brooklyn-mellow ambience, and sublime breaded pork chops are good year-round. • 787 Union St., Brooklyn (718-783-3800). (M)

★ **A Salt & Battery**

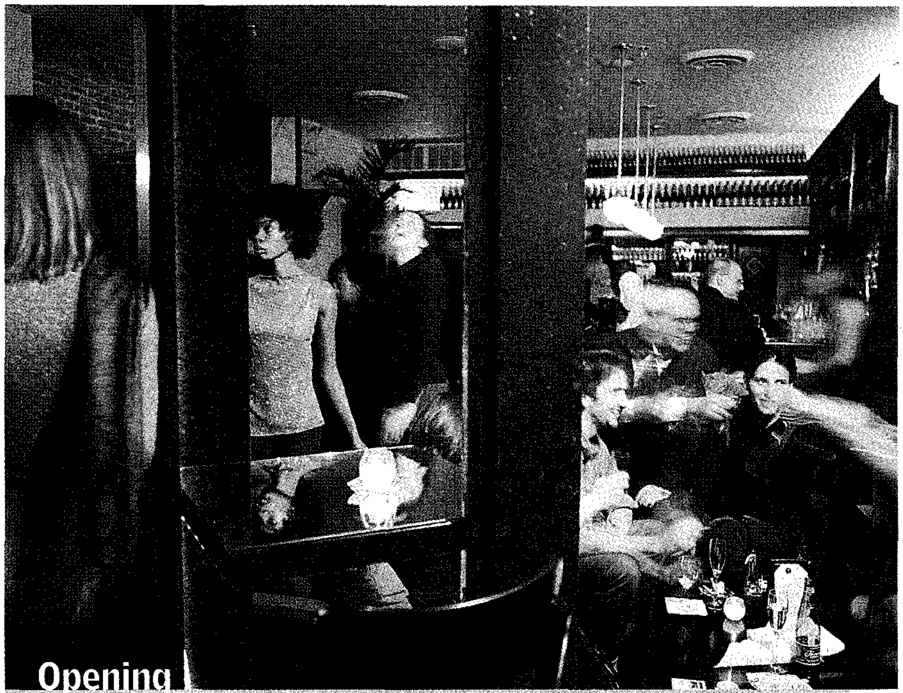
The folks from Tea & Sympathy have expanded their British empire with a fish-and-chips shop that literally reeks of authenticity. Aside from the main attraction, properly wrapped in British newspaper, there are mushy peas, pickled onions, Heinz baked beans, and the improbably edible deep-fried Mars Bars. Between orders, a relentlessly cheery staff spouts cockney slang while fry-chef Patsy Carroll—who used to cook in the British Merchant Navy and then, judging by his hoop earrings and Errol Flynn beard, turned pirate—cracks wise. • 112 Greenwich Ave. (212-691-2713). (I-M)

★ **Sandro's**

Has Roman chef Sandro Fioriti finally settled down? Those of us whose taste buds remember his signature *crisp-fried baby artichokes, pan-fried calamari*, and classic bucatini amatriciana from the original uptown Sandro's, all revived in this otherwise nondescript Chelsea storefront, can only hope. But judging by his recent restlessness, our advice is to get while the getting's good. • 200 Ninth Ave., nr. 22nd St. (212-633-8033). (M)

★ **Sandwich Planet**

Owner Will Brown got his start in the sandwich trade a dozen blocks north with his thriving Island Burgers and Shakes. At Planet, he reprises his boldly seasoned, lavishly garnished chicken churascos and hamburgers but also expands his Island oeuvre to include the kind of two-fisted retro sandwiches—Reubens, cheesesteaks, clubs, and croque-monsieurs—that have been displaced recently by wraps and other raised-pinky deviations. • 534 Ninth Ave., nr. 39th St. (212-273-9768). (I) ($)



Opening

Bubble, Bubble

Just in time for New Year's Eve: Hervé Rousseau, owner of midtown's popular champagne bar **Flûte**, has opened a larger, more decadent version of the hipster hangout in the Flatiron district. Beyond offering 150 brands of champagne—twenty by the glass—Rousseau plans to lure crowds with a live D.J., a sultry atmosphere, and an eclectic bar menu that includes Petrossian caviar, foie gras, and an entire page of Vietnamese fusion spring rolls. Don't miss the Chocolate Box, a tiny alcove seating five or six people, where cacao-holics can overdose on confections from La Maison du Chocolat and order drinks like hot chocolate or cocoa-and-cognac. (40 East 20th Street; 212-529-7870.)

★ **Shelly's New York**

The latest restaurant Shelly Fireman has created in his own image inhabits the space that was originally an Art Deco–era Horn & Hardart Automat. Only the assimilative Fireman would offer towering shellfish platters alongside newfangled chicken chow mein, barbecued ribs, and a burger audaciously crowned with seared foie gras and make it work. • 104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M-E)

★ **Strip House**

The Glazier Group and chef David Walzog, the same team responsible for Tapika, Michael Jordan's, and our slightly lower life expectancy, take a Gallic approach to the New York steakhouse menu with starters like a five-ounce foie gras torchon and sides like goose-fat potatoes and truffled cream spinach. (Try ordering that at Gallagher's.) Meanwhile, designer David Rockwell has given the former Asti's space a saucy new look to go with its naughty new name. • 13 E. 12th St. (212-328-0000). (M-E)

★ **Tocqueville**

At the loveliest new mom and pop shop in town, Marco Moreira and Jo-Ann Markovitzky have taken what they've learned from a decade of catering and added to it all the things they couldn't do in someone else's home to come up with a gently idiosyncratic nook that will take about twenty minutes to charm you. • 15 E. 15th St. (212-647-1515). (M-E)

★ **Triomphe**

Now that 44th Street west of Fifth is hotel row, the venerable Iroquois has emerged from its midlife stodge with a $13 million makeover and a pocket-size restaurant. Perhaps the prices could be sweeter, but there is refreshing pride in the serving crew, and much to savor on Steven Zobel's menu: tender braised rabbit, oysters simmered in Vermouth cream, sautéed chicken livers, and a commendably serious steak. • 49 W. 44th St. (212-453-4233). (M-E)

★ **Vaux Bistro**

At the more affordable, family-friendly reincarnation of what used to be Vaux, the menu reads rustic French, with daily specials like coq au vin, beef stew, and bouillabaisse (all $16), plus all the bistro classics we've come to expect: Frisée salad with meaty lardons and hot garlic croutons. Potato-and-leek soup. Terrine de canard. Mussels with addictive first-rate frites. And a chocolate-caramel bread pudding that will make you regret finishing them. • 278 Fifth Ave., nr. 1st St., Brooklyn (718-499-1433). (M)

★ **Viareggio**

At first glance, there's little to distinguish this dining room from countless others. But the kitchen's another story. Chef Donato Deserio's deft touch with pastas like creamless rigatoni alla vodka reinvigorates old standards, and entrées like a subtle Parmigiano-Reggiano-crusted chicken breast in white wine taste almost new. As does the *amuse-bouche* of spicy tomato salsa, served with crispy fried- cheese wafers. • 1347 Second Ave., at 71st St. (212-585-2900). (M)

★ **Wallsé**

Who knew veal goulash could be elegant? Kurt Gutenbrunner's version is an artful mound of tender meat you almost regret toppling. And though dishes like tafelspitz and wiener schnitzel seem like a culinary memoir, the guiding principle here is less goulash than Greenmarket. Local farmers supply Guttenbrunner with lemon thyme for his pike, heirloom tomatoes for his lamb salad, and the sweet strawberries that garnish his elderflower sorbet. Don't miss the quark dumplings. • 344 W. 11th St. (212-352-2300). (M-E)

Photograph by Magdalena Caris.

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ Aquagrill
Ever since we tasted chef-owner Jeremy Marshall's inspired falafel-crusted salmon, the notion of a naked pink fillet has been tough to swallow. But despite the high level of cooking, an offbeat and well-priced wine list, and unexpected grace notes like a welcoming *amuse-bouche* and complementary petits fours, it's still a rollicking neighborhood spot, where you can park yourself at the lively bar and watch the dexterous oyster shucker in action. • 210 Spring St. (212-274-0505). (M–E)

★ Balthazar
Keith McNally has countless pacesetting restaurants to his credit, but this is his masterpiece, an evocation of a Paris brasserie that outglows anything within Brie-tossing distance of the Seine. Yet for all its visual impact, Balthazar boasts equally compelling fare: tender braised lamb shoulder gets served over garganelli pasta, shepherd's pie is made with duck, grilled tuna floats over tomato-and-saffron coulis. And its oyster bar, short ribs, bread, and service make you not give a damn whether you ever see the Eiffel Tower. • 80 Spring St. (212-965-1414). (M)

★ Blue Ribbon
We could do without the maddening wait and a crowd a little too pleased with its permit for raucousness. But go anyway for a snappy dining staff that handles the cacophony without joining in, and tremendously vibrant raw seafood at a fair price. And above all, a menu that has no roots or rhythm other than its chef's passions. • 97 Sullivan St. (212-274-0404). (M)

★ Bo Ky
There are 30 soups at Bo-Ky. The best way to order them is by number. Don't read closely to see what's in them. And don't ask. You don't want to know. Whether the meat is pork chop or beef belly or chicken leg, just savor the smells wafting up from those bowls of Chinese, Cambodian and Vietnamese home cooking. It is tremendous soup, in size, flavor, and content. And the prices are pocket change. • 80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($)

★ Bouley Bakery
Love him or hate him, there's no denying that the famously obstreperous David Bouley—bouncing between this kitchen and Danube—gets the job done. And his loyal clientele gratefully lap it up in the ethereal form of degustation menus revolving around superlative seasonal ingredients like skate steamed with fresh chamomile, say, or organic baby lamb with eggplant moussaka. • 120 W. Broadway (212-964-2525). (M–E)

★ Canteen
It's not that the food is bad; just that it can't compete with the furniture (the orange-wool-upholstered chairs in particular). Executive chef Matthew Kenney has veered off his Mediterranean path to make people-pleasing comfort food like macaroni and cheese, rendered here with Wisconsin Asiago. An abbreviated menu is available late at night, when those fabulous chairs are most in demand. • 142 Mercer St. (212-431-7676). (M)

Capsouto Frères
Landmark French bistro with talked-about soufflés. Flemish-style building hosts local business folks at lunch. Dinner is a New York mix of neighborhood regulars, tourists, and trekkers from uptown. Dishes to try include the terrine Provençal and the roast duckling with ginger-and-cassis sauce. • 451 Washington St. (212-966-4900). (M–E)

★ Chanterelle
The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. You will hear no music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are about to be presented—the stunning juxtapositions of David's quail and star anise, lamb

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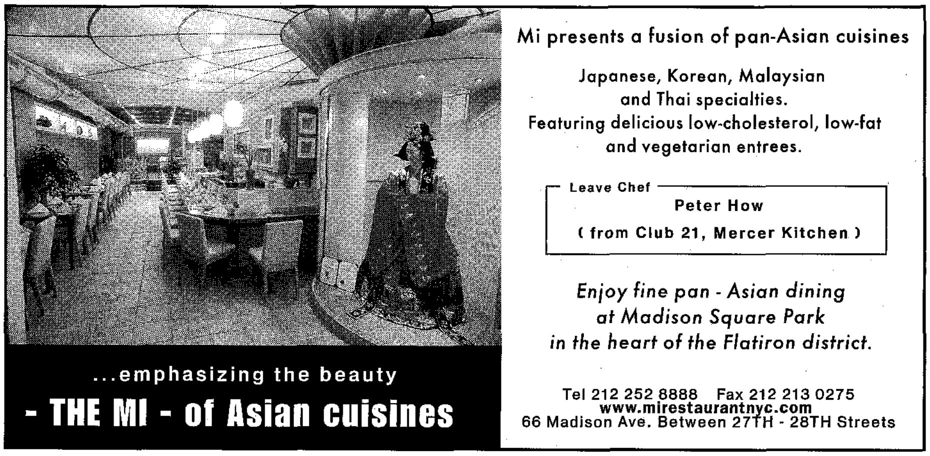

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with cumin crust, crabs in ginger and strawberry mille-feuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St. at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

★ City Hall

Chef-owner Henry Meer may be imagineering Old New York, with back-lit photos of bygone street life, but he can't help refining it, too. The triple-tier "Chrysler" shellfish highrise is global gluttony via the jet stream. Chesapeake she-crab soup is creamy perfection. But go for the marvelous double steak on the bone, a behemoth served stunningly rare. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777). (M–E)

★ Danube

David Bouley's outrageous, highly lacquered, velvet-swathed, Klimt-deckled little dining room is beautiful, fun, funny, and romantic. And, via his chef de cuisine, Mario Lohninger, his bone-marrow dumplings, the Tyrolean wine soup, the braised beef cheeks, and even the Wiener schnitzel manages to be Austro-Hungarian but not too. • 30 Hudson St. (212-791-3771). (E)

Divine Bar

The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates. Selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. • 55 Liberty St., second floor (212-791-WINE). (I–M)

The Greatest Bar on Earth

This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers and, of course, tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M)

★ Honmura An

While the management doesn't care about your entrance clout at Moomba, it all too obviously plays favorites. Most emphatic, however, is its sanctimoniousness about soba and udon noodles. Still, you won't be disappointed—unless you don't take the menu seriously when it claims that a dish is built around a single giant shrimp. • 170 Mercer St. (212-334-5253). (M–E)

Hudson River Club

From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But your attention may very well be diverted by the eye-catching American food—seafood sausage with white beans, potato-and-truffle ravioli, seared yellowfin tuna with caramelized foie gras—right in front of you. • 4 World Financial Center (212-786-1500). (M–E)

★ The Mercer Kitchen

Within Christian Liagre's conversion of a subterranean catacomb into a sultry, intimately shadowy quartet of fluid yet diverse sectors, executive chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten reveals how a few ingredients can create flavors that are lucid and compelling. Olive and radicchio join stewed rabbit, mint and coriander ring sea bass carpaccio, tomato soup is sparked by chili pepper and crabmeat. You may be sorry you never sprang for that loft on Spring. • 99 Prince St. (212-966-5454). (E)

Morton's of Chicago

The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge and the quality is consistent. And in case you hadn't noticed, beef is back. Again. • 90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E)

98 Kenmare

A modern American bistro in the old Patrissy's space that features an eclectic international menu. The chef's specialties include barbecued duck in a ginger-scallion pancake; a shrimp-and-mussel chowder with sweet potatoes, coconut, and lime; and five-onion risotto. • 98 Kenmare St. (212-226-2888). (M–E)

★ Nobu

There is not another experience like it in town. Nobu Matsuhisa is a chef of such wondrous originality that nothing on his menu is merely as it reads. Each dish reinvents your definition of what it should taste like. Teensy oysters make your eyes pop. Bonito soothes the throat like sable. Seaweed sparkles. The fake trees aren't necessary. Two bites and you're in Eden. • 105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (M–E)

Omen

Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you're suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that's reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. • 113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M–E) AE only.

★ 71 Clinton Fresh Food

Is there much call for Scottish salmon wrapped in avocado at the intersection of Clinton and Rivington Streets? Well, yes, judging by the hungry crowd cooling its heels at the bar. Jean Georges alum Wylie Dufresne cooks seemingly complicated, easy-to-eat food like beer-braised short ribs geometrically sculpted into a perfect square; and parsley-root purée with a little parsley-root raft of lump crabmeat. (To eat, capsize and stir.) The chef's dad, a warm and punny presence on the floor, compiled the winning wine list. • 71 Clinton St. (212-614-6960). (M)

★ Wild Blue

It sounds like a bar right outside the NASA compound, but in fact, it's an intimate, unpretentious room that doesn't try to compete with the famous view. Chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steak house in side dishes like creamed spinach and butternut-squash hash. Don't wait for a special occasion to take the 107-flight elevator ride. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E)

Windows on the World

Yes, tourists love it. But Michael Lomanaco's sophisticated American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs and lobster potpie with truffle cream manages to steal some attention away from the main attraction, that spectacular view of Manhattan Island. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Bond Street

The crowd is too cool, the rooms too cozy, the waiters way too pretty. No way is this anywhere you're going to get chirashi worth much more than a can of Bumble Bee. Boy, are you about to be surprised. With food this fresh, original, and vibrantly spiced, the kitchen can easily take on most traditional midtown sushi houses and wouldn't have to walk out of a room backwards if Nobu's troops were in attendance. • 6 Bond St. (212-777-2500). (M–E)

★ Clementine

John Schenk whisked and chopped his way from Gotham Bar and Grill to West Broadway, mad.61, the Monkey Bar, and, finally, his own swank Greenwich Village corner, where he serves the soulful, sophisticated food that made him famous: sticky off-the-bone spare ribs with fried green tomatoes, luscious chilli-rubbed pork loin, and his signature cod on mashed potatoes. • 1 Fifth Ave. (212-253-0003). (M–E)

★ Five Points

Every neighborhood needs a place with a good bar, a serious kitchen, and zero pretensions. NoHo has one in this Med-American restaurant, where a split log running down the center of the dining room conveys a babbling brook. Zen though that may sound, chef Marc Meyer's hearty cooking is more boldly passionate than coolly contemplative. Duck-and-foie gras sausage and wood-oven roasted Magret duck show enough spikiness to make you look down and go "*hmmmm*" before you go back to the conversation. • 31 Great Jones St. (212-253-5700). (M)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill

Alfred Portale created a restaurant where anyone, dressed any way, is invited with affability to partake of his talent for making American cuisine exciting and as easy to fathom as a burger and fries. Even when faced with soft-shell crabs or squab, say, topped with potato purée and fava beans for the first time, Gotham customers attack their plates with a fearlessness suited to Great Adventure. Actually, this is a great adventure. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (E)

★ Il Bagatto

Though so dark the menu can hardly be read and so deliriously energized you'd best be in the mood for a nonvintage bottle of red, Il Bagatto piles on super pastas, salads, and antipasti as full of sharp left hooks as that wine and as cheap as the hangover you'll have tomorrow. • 192 E. 2nd St. (212-228-0977). (I–M)

Osso Buco

Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

★ Prune

There's not a wrinkled plum in sight at this American

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Liquid Asset

The last place you'd expect to find a bottle of vinegar is in a locked display case. But when the three-and-a-half-ounce bottle inside costs $500, the Harry Winston treatment makes sense. **Leonardi's 100-year-old balsamic vinegar**, made in Modena and available at Williams-Sonoma's new flagship store, is recommended for flavoring meat and as an accompaniment for strawberries and cream or vanilla ice cream. Just hope that your guests don't ask for seconds. (127 East 59th Street; 917-369-1131.)

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

bistro. But chef Gabrielle Hamilton's childhood nickname indicates the sort of unpretentious home cooking at which she excels, a grab bag of eccentric, multicultural influences that is, at heart, American—as any place whose quirky bar menu includes Triscuits alongside serrano ham with fresh figs must be. Minus the traditional categories for appetizers, main courses, and sides, the menu gives as prominent placement to vegetables like creamed corn and roasted beets as to the more entrée-ish capon on a savory garlic crouton, or the pastrami duck breast with a rye-flavored, fried-shallot omelet. • 54 E. 1st St. (212-677-6221). (M)

★ 2nd Avenue Deli
A recent facelift struck fear in the hearts of those who believe that a true pastrami sandwich must be authenticated by grimy formica and generations' worth of atmospheric shabbiness. But so far, so good. This East Village landmark continues to draw dedicated fressers with its great fries, chicken in the pot, the near-lethal hush puppy (a frank in a potato knish), and the hard-boiled service. • 156 Second Ave. (212-677-0606). (I-M)

Below 14th Street, West

★ Babbo
Ever try goat cheese tortellini dusted in dried orange and wild fennel pollen? Or spicy lamb sausage romanced by mint love letters and a paste of sweet peas? Get ready to crave them. Ingredients you didn't expect or never heard of become unforgettable. Mario Batali's original yet airy Italian cooking will stun, fool, bewitch and ultimately obsess you. Just get it together to make another reservation before you leave. • 110 Waverly Pl. (212-777-0303). (E)

★ Blue Ribbon Bakery
Don't be hoodwinked by what looks like one more brick-walled Village joint with first-come-first-serve seating and a brunch menu. Instead, focus on the intriguing all-over-the-place menu's superb steak tartare, perfectly smoked sable, a butcher's plate to shame most Italian antipasti, a BLT that really is a meal. And can you pass up anywhere that can still make a root-beer float? • 33 Downing St. (212-337-0404). (M)

★ Da Silvano
Few of the fervent regulars here—including the city's media, fashion, and art-world elite—seem to recall an Italian restaurant whose menu wasn't sopping in red sauce before Da Silvano. The roasted standing duck is crackling, the lamb tender and moist, the artichoke salad as brash as the air around Montecatini. And not an eggplant-parmigiana hero in sight. • 260 Sixth Ave. (212-982-2343). (M-E)

★ Fressen
The three rooms are as spacious and sleek as an Audi TT. And considering the trendificant meat packing setting and the priorities of nightly revelers, the house could have gotten away with a post-Cosmo menu of meager-morseled pizzas or duck burritos. Instead, they've opted for a selection of semi-organic dishes like escabeche of sardines or a mullet pot-au-feu. And rather than being somewhere hip, you actually feel hip, thanks to the refreshingly congenial staff. • 421 W. 13th St. (212-645-7775). (M-E)

Jekyll & Hyde
This boisterous Village restaurant bills itself as a "haunted explorers' club," offering interactive entertainment and—so that famished explorers may keep up their strength—a menu of American fare including "voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak. • 91 Seventh Ave. So. (212-989-7701). (I-M)

★ Lupa
We love this down-home Roman trattoria and not just for Mario Batali's celebration of odd animal parts and Italian delicatessen, or for partner Joe Bastianich's bid to bring depth and finesse to a casual Village joint's wine service. We like the mood, the food, and the gentle prices, but so do legions of tuned-in New Yorkers. It's almost as tough a sanctum to crack as its pricier sibling, Babbo. • 170 Thompson St. (212-982-5089). (M)

★ Meigas
The décor is a little goofy and the location, on Hudson Street, in the Siberia of West SoHo, is a bust. But chef Luis Bollos's kitchen produces the best Spanish cuisine (Galician, actually) in town. In his hands, hefty dishes like braised oxtail croquettes and roast suckling pig appear light, almost candied. His gazpacho—a light confection, loaded with Maine lobster—makes the usual approximations of this dish look like crankcase oil. Trendy Iberian jellies and foams are mostly relegated to dessert, of which a wondrous chocolate layer ganache is best. • 350 Hudson St. (212-627-5800). (M-E)

★ Pastis
Keith McNally's Pastis looks more like a grander Lucky Strike than a repro of the visually faultless Balthazar, but not only does the slight downshifting make perfect sense; considering the tallow-rivulet-ribboned neighborhood, it also renders the new place instantly less imposing. Service is breezier, the crowd more genially noisy, and the only thing disappointing is that you don't live closer. • 9 Ninth Ave. (212-929-4844). (M)

Tio Pepe
A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. • 168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I-M)

Villa Mosconi
Traditional Northern Italian home cooking in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. • 69 MacDougal St. (212-673-0390). (M)

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Bambou
A hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-fronded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M)

★ City Bakery
No one comes close to Maury Rubin at satisfying our grown-up snacking impulse. Heavenly tarts, perfectly textured cookies and brownies, lusciously tart lemonades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—even homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly from the counter. Pre-dessert, there are inspired sandwiches like roasted pear and ricotta salata and the only salad bar we obsess over. • 22 E. 17th St. (212-366-1414). (I-M)

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel
Commuters and business travelers can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal from the French-influenced American menu. • 42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M-E)

★ Cosette
Everything about this humble 30-seat restaurant is unswervingly Gallic, from the Côtes du Rhône table red to the menu (a Gruyère-crusted brandade de morue, rich onion soup, flaky pissaladière, textbook juicy steak-frites). Everything, that is, except for the host's friendly manner and the West African chef. Cosette is exactly what every neighborhood should be lucky enough to have: an affordable French bistro with consistently well-executed food and a comfortable, low-key atmosphere. • 163 E. 33rd St. (212-889-5489). (M)

★ Eleven Madison Park
While this soaringly grand space in the MetLife lobby will never be a room for clandestine assignations, the compensating grace of the staff, and simple but big-flavored dishes—capon stuffed with pistachio and garlic, cod with sausage and mustard greens that don't get lost in the landscape—make it a vibrant place to do business and an incredibly sensible choice for the family. • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-0905). (E)

★ Gramercy Tavern
Tavern has become Danny Meyer's most appealing restaurant, with a no reservations discount bar room

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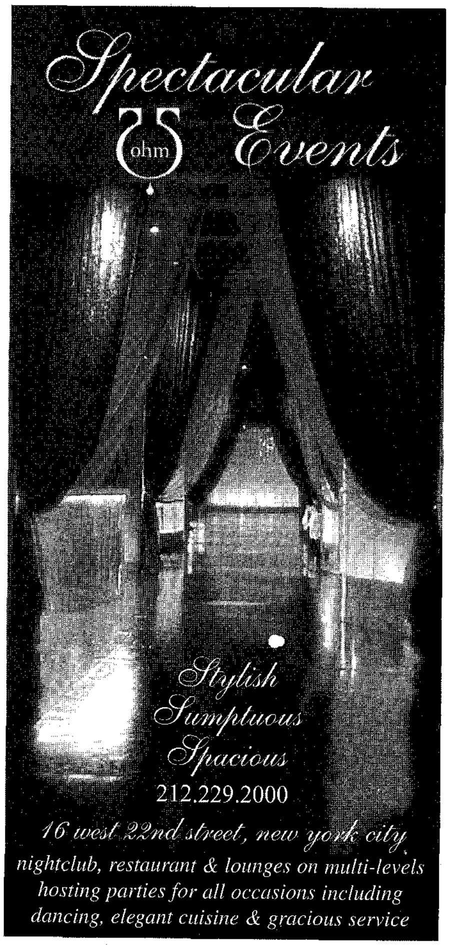

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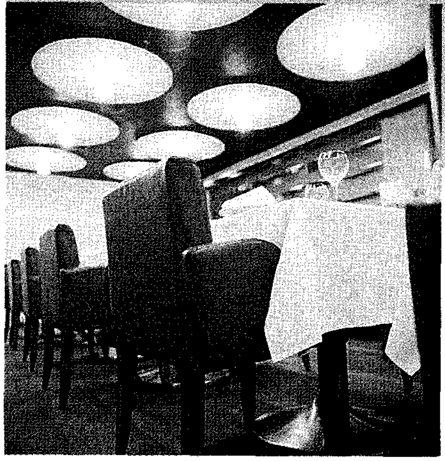
Opening

Elite Meat

It's a stampede! **The Prime Grill** (pictured, right), opening December 12 in midtown, is a Glatt-kosher steakhouse offering an array of aged cuts, as well as various fish and pastas. Try the Mushk steak, a thin, tender cut of beef from the bovine's rib. (There's a sushi bar, too, for that no-red-meat killjoy you brought along.) If you'd rather grill your own, all of Prime Grill's kosher cuts are available at www.theprimegrill.com. And **Tuscan Steak** (below), just opened in Murray Hill and run by China Grill Management, who brought you Asia de Cuba and Cafeteria, among others, combines the simple, traditional cooking of Tuscany with the modern design of Jeffrey Beers. Steaks come in two sizes, large and larger, and the family-style menu includes an extensive list of Tuscan wines and classic Tuscan dishes prepared with a modern flair, including white-truffle garlic bread and veal osso buco risotto. (The Prime Grill, 60 East 49th Street, 212-692-9292; Tuscan Steak, 622 Third Avenue, at 40th Street, 212-404-1700.)



to make one churlish for not living or working nearby. Chef Tom Colicchio pairs foods folks crave with elements they usually don't. Roast sirloin of beef comes with braised beef cheeks. Crabmeat fondue contains sea urchin. Not only does each gamble pay off, but so tickled are diners by their nascent daring that on their next visit, damned if they don't demand sweetbreads with Jerusalem artichokes and roasted cod with brussels sprouts. • 42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (M–E)

★ Gyroland

Is it a slice joint, a Greek coffee shop, a neon sign store, or all of the above? While this brightly lit restaurant may suffer from a mild identity crisis, torn between serving strictly Turkish fare and appeasing the neighborhood clientele of hospital workers and police cadets with pizza and cheese-steak sandwiches, it's also an undersung source for fresh and delicious meze, doner kebab, kofte, lahmacun, and pide. The cops don't know what they're missing. • 351 Second Ave., nr. 20th St. (212-254-3200). (I)

Heartland Brewery

A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café. Accompany your choice of microbrew with crayfish-shrimp gumbo, a smoked-pork-loin Reuben, or steak au poivre. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. • 35 Union Square W. (212-645-3400). Also, 1285 Sixth Ave., at 51st St. (582-8244). (I–M)

Madison Bistro

What every neighborhood needs: a casual spot for French classics like escargots, steak-frites, and bouillabaisse. Open-faced sandwiches called tartines are available at the bar, as are rustic French wines poured from imported oak barrels. • 238 Madison Ave., nr. 37th St. (212-447-1919). (M)

Meli Melo

This cheerful neighborhood spot offers a very reasonable fixed-price dinner—$31.50 for four courses. The seafood-heavy French menu has Asian and Mediterranean touches in dishes like seared tuna with baby bok choy and rack of lamb with couscous. • 110 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St. (212-686-5551). (M)

Metronome

This lofty Flatiron space is well suited to private functions, but even the lone diner will find the Deco design welcoming and the food—riffs on a Mediterranean theme like "pinchos" of vegetables with goat cheese, and za'atar-crusted rack of lamb—satisfying. Live jazz performed Wednesday through Saturday. • 915 Broadway, at 21st St. (212-505-7400). (M)

Mi

A talented team of cooks with impressive-sounding résumés (Mercer Kitchen, Hatsuhana) collaborate on a menu including sushi and sashimi, pad Thai, Malaysian spare ribs, and Korean bibimbob at this four-flavor pan-Asian restaurant. • 66 Madison Ave., nr. 27th St. (212-252-8888). (M–E)

★ Oyster Bar

Unperturbed by the arriviste competition in the food court next door, the jewel of the pre-renovation Terminal continues to serve superlative pan roasts and clam chowders, and an overwhelming assortment of East and West Coast oysters. The sprawling subterranean space has the hustle-bustle feel of a cafeteria, which its snaking counters resemble, but don't be fooled—you pay for the privilege of eating under that vaulted tile ceiling. • Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M–E)

★ Tabla

It's diminishing to categorize Floyd Cardoz's clean Goan-spiced Maine crab cake or his exquisite pairing of seared foie gras with a black-pepper-and-pear compote as nouvelle Delhi; he's gone and forged a deliriously satisfying union of this country's produce with the strong, heady spices and bewitchingly pungent condiments of his homeland. A less expensive menu at the Bread Bar downstairs aspires less to break new ground than to rekindle old taste memories—specifically Cardoz's, including his mom's recipe for beef assad, otherwise known as "Indian pot roast." • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-0667). (M–E)

★ Union Pacific

Maybe if this were a less self-effacing restaurant, less content with its serenity and more intent on trumpeting its singularly inventive chef, Rocco DiSpirito, more people would know how successfully it rivals its real rivals. But that would miss the point. One has to admire the confidence to serve tuna with yuzu and fresh wasabi cool as a breezeway in Aruba, the brashness of sautéing skate in lime-pickled Swiss chard, and the chic to place a peck of pickled peppers round a rich and rousing pheasant without bellowing out "Ba da boom!!" nightly on the TV Food Network. • 111 E. 22nd St. (212-995-8500). (E)

★ Union Square Cafe

Nowhere else are uncommon combinations such as rhubarb-blood-orange chutney and wasabi mashed potatoes so seamlessly incorporated into dishes (so as to never frighten the buttoned-down natives). Surprisingly, vegetarians will eat better here than at any of their hallowed haunts. The bar is a great place to lunch solo. And the devil's food truffle with chocolate sauce can make you act the fool. • 21 E. 16th St. (212-243-4020). (M–E)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar

This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. • 234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M)

Hush

Part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. • 17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M)

★ Mesa Grill

It's a clumsy room. But just keep your head down and don't stop eating—Bobby Flay's mastery of the spicier things in life keeps getting more polished and exciting. Ribs, tomato-tortilla soup, shrimp-and-corn tamale, blue-corn-crusted snapper, and pan-roasted rabbit—eat here, and you'll ramble on too—are just sensational. Flay's gonna rope you in, and leave you hog-tied and smiling. • 102 Fifth Ave. (212-807-7400). (E)

Ohm

An all-in-one entertainment center offering dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an eclectic menu including sesame chicken tenders, Black Angus steak, and grilled salmon with lemon-caper beurre blanc. • 16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E)

★ The Red Cat

Not every artist is starving, and the ones with bank accounts and hearty appetites would do well to make this their home away from home among the West Chelsea galleries. Hanging lanterns, barn siding, and artwork contribute to the funky décor, and the bar is the roomy, welcoming sort that solo diners find appealing. It's hard to find a clunker on the Med-American menu. The quick saute of zucchini with toasted almonds is something your mother would never have imagined—a vegetable that could spoil your appetite. • 227 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-242-1122). (M)

Simply Pasta

Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers antipasti, salads, pizzas, and pastas—over two dozen of them. • 120 W. 41st St. (212-391-0805). (I)

World Yacht Dining Cruises

Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown and Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Askew

Free French fries. For some, that's reason enough to visit this restaurant where virtually everything else conforms to the theme of marinated meat on a stick. There's skewered chicken and mango, beef au poivre, and panko-crusted salmon, plus stickless soups, salads, and vegetable sides. • 1004 Second Ave., at 53rd St. (212-421-8742). (I–M)

Photographs: top, Bruce Katz; bottom, Magdalena Caris.

★ Della Femina
It might be easier to score a table here than at the infamous ad man's East Hampton address, but don't read too much into that: chef Kevin Penner's souped-up seasonal American menu tastes just as good in the 212 area code. There's a little country and a little city in his cold corn soup with black truffle coulis, and Dover sole "fish sticks" with a caviar remoulade. And you can almost smell Georgica beach in the lobster roll. • 131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (E)

Divine Bar
This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I–M)

Jimmy Sung's
This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions including sushi and sashimi. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings, or mini-banquets. • 219 E. 44th St. (212-682-5678). (I–M)

★ Kuruma Zushi
Nobu and Bondst might draw celebrity sushi fans, but this is where you'll find the true fanatics, willing to squander their savings on superlatively fresh sushi and sashimi in nondescript surroundings one flight above a midtown side street. Cognoscenti put themselves and their taste buds in the nimble hands of the sushi chef, who amazes with imported treasures like Japanese aji, sea eel, and prawn-Kuruma ebi. • 7 E. 47th St. (212-317-2802). (E)

★ La Grenouille
With a $45 prix fixe lunch (doubled at dinner), this isn't the place to pinch pennies. But it certainly feels like du vrai de vrai, with its untranslated menu and its classic cuisine. The menu runs the Gallic gamut, from potage Saint-Germain (pea soup) to grilled sole. Still, for the money, you get gracious service and plush surroundings that transform any meal into a special occasion. Bouquets that big aren't arrangements. They're statements. • 3 E. 52nd St. (212-752-1495). (E)

La Mangeoire
A bit of Provence in midtown. This rustic French country restaurant featuring hearty fare like Mediterranean fish soup with rouille and rabbit fricassé in a mustard tarragon sauce is a boon for a neighborhood otherwise lacking in savoir fare. • 1008 Second Ave., nr. 53rd St. (212-759-7086). (M)

L'Actuel
Mosaic tiles, sand-blasted mirrors, beechwood accents, and mohair and suede upholstery lift this French restaurant located at the Kimberly out of hotel-restaurant anonymity. Equally enticing are Michelin-starred chef Jean-Yves Schillinger's grazing menu: foie gras with black cherries, marinated shrimp skewers, excellent tartes flambées, plus a full raw bar. • 145 E. 50th St. (212-583-0001). (M–E)

★ Le Cirque 2000
It took him almost a year to get the Byzantine elements of his gastronomic big top to snap into place, but Sirio Maccioni's Le Cirque 2000 is finally a startling production of urbane dexterity. But with chef Sotha Khunn and pastry chef Jacques Torres soon to take their simultaneous leaves, we'll have to wait and see whether ringmaster Maccioni can continue to dazzle us with this high-wire act. We're betting he can. • 455 Madison Ave. (212-303-7788). (E)

★ Lespinasse
Old-fashioned, luxurious hotel dining is not everyone's idea of fun these days—even with the possibility of a noontime flirtation and posh hotel rooms so handy. But chef Christian Delouvrier's cooking is anything but a bore. His butternut squash soup is revved up with chunks of duck breast and crusty foie gras, lamb rack and loin is touched with Chartreuse and coffee, and baby pig with cassoulet is carefully sauced to keep it from getting too rustically porky. With inventive cooking like this, even the recently redone room—so French and namby-pamby when it ought to be robber-baron American—seems pleasantly mellowed. • 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E)

★ Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.
If you're looking for him, he ain't there. But if you've come for great beef, that's another story. A better slab of New York strip sirloin would be hard to find, no matter which train you board downstairs and no matter how far you travel. And you're surrounded by the most spectacular restoration this city has seen in years. It's almost as exciting as sitting courtside. • 23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (E)

Monkey Bar
A swanky renovation by David Rockwell and chef Andrew Chase's inspired New American menu have infused this midtown landmark with a new spirit. Plus there's nightly piano music and a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the adjacent monkey-mural bar. • 60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E)

Montebello
Upscale Northern Italian fare, especially affordable in the four-course pretheater menu. Specialties include angel's-hair pasta with fresh tomato and basil, and shrimp sautéed with cognac, broccoli, and red peppers. Private party room available. • 120 E. 56th St. (212-753-1447). (M)

Morton's of Chicago
This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. • 551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E)

Nino's Positano
An upscale Italian restaurant specializing in food from the southern regions, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

Oscar's
A contemporary American brasserie named for the Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschirky, creator of the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The menu leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tuna tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with truffled red-wine marmalade. • Lexington Ave. at 50th St. (212-872-4920). (M)

★ Peacock Alley
In this cushioned cocoon of a dining room off the lobby of the Waldorf Astoria, chef Laurent Gras—a disciple of Alain Ducasse—offers diners a chance to mix and match bite-size "courses" chosen from categories like Ocean and River, Field and Forest, and Farm. Or put yourself entirely in his hands with the seven-course "tête à tête" menu, each streamlined dish composed of just two ingredients achieving, in Gras's words, a "single clean note." • 301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E)

★ Sushisay
An emergency room is more inviting; everyone's greeted with the same clinical courtesy. Sushi presentation is handsome and precise, but hardly breathtaking. The taste, however, is something else. Sushisay has the cleanest, most seductive sliced raw fish in town. Go with someone who will help you ignore the setting. Or just close your eyes. Don't worry. Your other senses will be doing overtime. • 38 E. 51st St. (212-755-1780). (M–E)

★ The Four Seasons
They're still the most perfect dining rooms in town. Happily, the owners sensed how marvelous it would be if the food matched the peerless design. They've radically altered an expensive menu to be more inventive, more seasoned, more current, and worth the bucks. The power lunchers may ignore what's on their plates, but the rest of us won't. • 99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne
Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant overlooking a particularly swank stretch

THE VIEWS, THE REVIEWS

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HUDSON RIVER CLUB S 24 26 23 $58
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■ *"Spectacular" harbor views are the backdrop for "terrific" Hudson Valley cuisine and "first -class" service at this "clubby", "spacious" WFC standout, it's "wonderful" for business or "celebrations", but as you'd expect, this "class-act" comes at "expense-account" prices.*

ZAGATSURVEY® 1999
HUDSON RIVER CLUB S 24 26 23 $55
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■ *"Impeccable" service, "delicious" Hudson Valley food, "handsome" decor and "gorgeous views" of NY harbor define this "pricey" WFC "class act"; a business venue for lunch, it can be breathtakingly "romantic" in the evening.*

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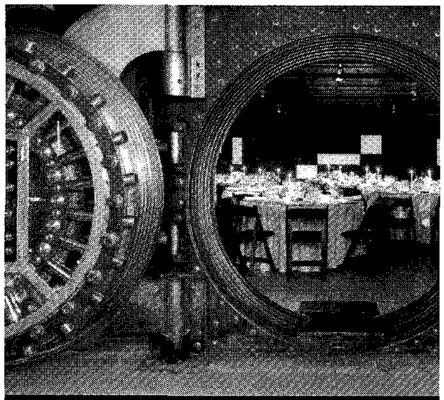

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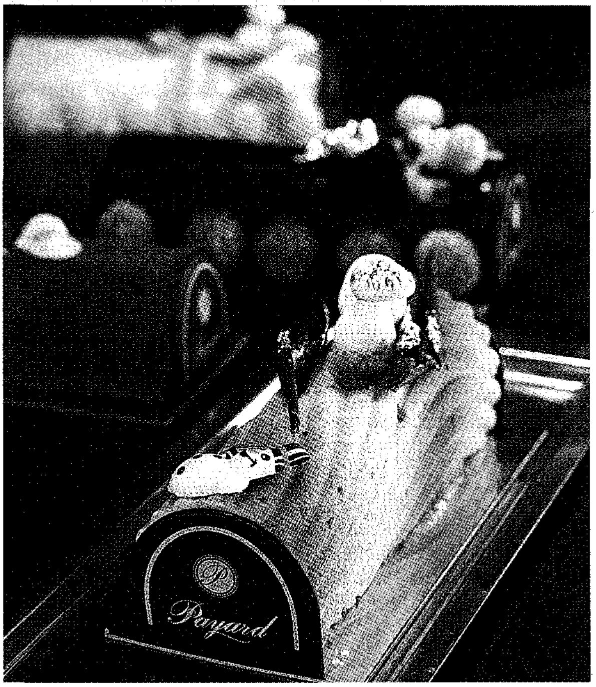
Object of Desire

Breaking the Log Jam

Pastry king François Payard felt a bit like Scrooge last year when he sold all of his 2,000 bûches de Noëls so quickly that his **Payard Pâtisserie** had to turn away customers seeking the festive sponge-cake Yule logs. So this year he's enlisted his mother, father, sister, and brother—accomplished pastry chefs all—to help crank out at least another thousand. The Payard family (flying in from France for the season) will be hand-crafting four varieties: chestnut, hazelnut, chocolate, and Mandarin orange. To order, call between December 5 and December 23; the cakes can be picked up on December 23 from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. and on Christmas Eve until 6 P.M. (1032 Lexington Avenue, near 73rd Street; 212-717-5252, extension 111.)



of Fifth Avenue. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a trio of soups), foie gras (with red-onion compote), and poached Dover sole. The $50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E)

B. Smith's
Barbara Smith, who launched her culinary empire around the corner, is now ensconced on Restaurant Row, where she feeds a theatergoing clientele her own version of global cuisine, from Thai-spiced wings and Saigon shrimp rolls to the evocatively named "so slow roast dry rub buttah ribs." Live jazz Friday and Saturday night. • 320 W. 46th St. (212-315-1100). (M)

Ben Benson's Steak House
This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of steakhouse standards. • 123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E)

Bombay Palace
This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent Indian breads. • 30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M)

Halcyon
An elegant setting and carefully presented food. A creative American menu with global accents includes lemon-lime salmon steak, rack of lamb with pumpkin spaetzle, and lobster three ways. A $45 pretheater dinner prix fixe is a good deal. • 151 W. 54th St., in the Rihga Royal Hotel. (212-468-8722). (E)

★ Island Burgers and Shakes
This Hell's Kitchen storefront with a Southern California-vibe specializes in burgers and chicken sandwiches, or churascos, in countless combinations and served on great bread and with superior condiments. A blackened churasco is almost painfully spicy and needs only minor embellishment (some blue cheese, or avocado and Monterey jack) to gain admission into our sandwich hall of fame. Great malteds douse the flames. • 766 Ninth Ave., nr. 51st St. (212-307-7394). (I) ($)

Johnnie's
This old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. • 135 W. 45th St. (212-869-5565). (I–M)

★ JUdson Grill
It's a room so vast and vaulted you expect them to be announcing Trailways departures. But chef Bill Telepan's cooking, propelled by a rousing level of confidence in bold flavors and pairings, matches the bravura of the room. With blithe deftness, he makes the familiar seem fresh. Crab cakes get dashed with lemon verbena, chickpea soup tickles insidiously, and loin of pork with apple compote will leave you happy. • 152 W. 52nd St. (212-582-5252). (E)

La Veranda
Northern Italian food. A popular theater district spot offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta and brunch on weekends. Free parking (with dinner) from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M. • 163 W. 47th St. (212-391-0905). (M)

Langan's
American cuisine in a theater-district shrine to the stars of stage and screen. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks and herb-crusted rack of lamb to crab cakes and marinated duck breast. Theatergoers will want to know about the $23.50 prix fixe dinner, and music lovers about the live jazz and blues on Saturday night and the Sunday jazz brunch. • 150 W. 47th St. (212-869-5482). (M)

★ Le Bernardin
Criticizing Le Bernardin is like analyzing rainbows. Just try to describe the snapper in coconut milk or the black bass with truffles and celery root. No matter what you say, you sound like a fool. Submit to the sorcery of chef Eric Ripert, the bewitchery of owner and co-creator Maguy Le Coze, and experience the thrilling sensation of having everything that surrounds you perfect. • 155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E)

Les Pyrénées
French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse is recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. • 251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M)

Martini's
Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

Pig and Whistle
A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. • 165 W. 47th St. (212-302-0112). (M)

★ Redeye Grill
This place jumps late at night with live jazz, a cacophony of paintings by artists those latter-day Duveens Saatchi and Giuliani have yet to discover, and a fine smoked-fish platter, plus the town's quintessential cobb salad. • 888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (212-541-9000). (M–E)

Sitar Indian Cuisine
This casual restaurant attracts office workers and tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. • 58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M)

St. Andrews
In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor revolves around pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features rack of lamb and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. • 120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I–M)

Trattoria Dopo Teatro
Chef Andrea Pace is famous for his open ravioli of lobster and lamb, which appear on his Northern Italian menu alongside dishes like sautéed venison chops and risotto with baby shrimps. The dining room is decorated with Italian cinema stills and single-minded connoisseurs can pursue their passions in the wine room, the grappa room, or the cigar lounge. • 125 W. 44th St. (212-869-2849). (M)

Zanzibar
The crowd at this loungy Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave, nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café
This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the Emporio Armani boutique offers fresh salads, al dente pastas, sandwiches, and entrée specials like chicken breast with lentils. • 601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M)

Astra
The D&D Building's unofficial commissary has a stellar view, a menu devised by Charlie Palmer, and is open to the public for lunch only. Try grilled salmon niçoise, purée of wild mushrooms, and the Astra Blast—a dressed-to-kill BLT. • 979 Third Ave., nr. 58th St. (212-644-9394). (I–M)

★ Brooklyn Diner U.S.A.
If this is how owner Shelly Fireman chooses to memorialize the Brooklyn of his youth (which happens to have been spent in the Bronx), we won't complain. It's comfort-food heaven: big portions of exuberantly non-diet Americana like pigs in a blanket and a ham-flecked linguine baked in a too-rich-to-finish sauce that modestly bills itself as macaroni and cheese. • 212 W. 57th St. (212-581-8900). (M)

★ Felidia
In between writing cookbooks and taping segments of "Lidia's Italian Table" for PBS, Lidia Bastianich, the matriarch of the clan responsible in part for Lupa, Esca, and Becco, oversees this elegant bastion of Italian

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

cooking. But chef Fortunato Nicotra deserves credit for a new breath of energy at the range. Sauces are lighter, pastas still wonderful, and entrees get deftly tweaked. The wine list always impresses, and olive oil connoisseurs can spring for a $7 comparative tasting. • 243 E. 58th St. (212-758-1479). (E)

Jennifer's Restaurant
This casual Italian restaurant, a welcome refuge for tourists and local businesspeople, serves well-prepared classic Italian-American dishes, including shrimp stuffed with crabmeat, and linguini with whole lobster in a garlicky tomato sauce. • 117 W. 58th St. (212-397-4256). (M)

★ March
If you're not in the mood, March can seem awfully precious. Your meal a succession of intricately thought-out small courses (either four or seven): shards of grilled duck in a tart shower of lime and mango, for instance. Service that almost gets a tissue to you before you've sneezed. But should there come a time when you want to be surrounded by people who have every right to their effusive confidence, Wayne Nish and Joseph Scalice offer one of New York's most deliciously covert seductions. • 405 E. 58th St. (212-754-6272). (E)

Nirvana
The only Indian restaurant with a superb fifteenth-floor-view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, kababs, and vegetarian dishes. • 30 Central Park So. (212-486-5700). (M)

★ The Russian Tea Room
If he hasn't been lionized as a landmark himself, Warner LeRoy certainly deserves a Landmarks Preservation Commission crown for polishing up the fanciful red and green frippery of the Russian Tea Room with so little trauma. Whether you love or hate the trout swimming inside the acrylic bear, you can't fault dishes like borscht and Georgian-spiced seared halibut. • 150 W. 57th St. (212-974-2111). (E)

★ San Domenico
You won't find a more elegant big-deal Italian restaurant in New York. We treasure it for the luxurious space at and between tables, the cool coach-leather chairs, the clockwork service, and the refinement of the risottos, pastas, fish, and game. Owner Tony May has an uncompromising passion for the highest quality Italian ingredients and devotedness to classical technique that rivals any Michelin-starred chef, and it shows. • 240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

★ Cafe Boulud
Most chefs have one menu to worry about. At Daniel Boulud's beige-on-beige bistro, Andrew Carmellini has four. For "Le Voyage," he globe-trots wherever his taste buds take him, from Vietnam to New Orleans. Mixing and matching is encouraged, so there's no reason why you can't begin with fresh- and smoked-salmon latkes from "La Saison," segue into potato-crusted sea bass from "La Tradition," and conclude with a warm fig tart from the menu called "Le Potager," nirvana for the vegetarian gourmet. • 20 E. 76th St. (212-772-2600). (E)

Cafe Crocodile
A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan in an intimate, romantic townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Attracts serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. • 354 E. 74th St. (212-249-6619). (M)

★ Cello
Owner Jacques Le Magueresse has chosen every appointment (Bernaudaud dishes, monochromatic flowers, and almost reflective mahogany walls) to serve as an elegant yet unobtrusive backdrop for the whisper-light delicacies that emerge from chef Laurent Tourondel's kitchen. Rougets glistening like bloodstones in a raw tomato sauce. Turbot that melts like cotton candy. And frozen crême bruleé that must have the Häagen-Dazs people turning like dervishes. • 53 E. 77th St. (212-517-1200). (E)

★ Daniel
Daniel Boulud is blessed with the gift of being able to add familiar flavors into the most stunning of summations, like walnuts and foie gras that intensify the lush gaminess of quail. He routinely triumphs in why-didn't-anyone-else-think-of-it feats like finding what envelopes sweetbreads to leave you without that heady aftertaste—suspending them between a rhubarb glaze and spinach purée. And his chocolate bombe soars like no other. • 60 E. 65th St. (212-288-0033). (E)

★ Etats-Unis
Behold a small, square, dramatic, and spartan room, devoid of any table-hopping, cell phones, or change-of-life blondes. The daily-changing menu choices are spare, but consistent in their bent towards slow roasting, robust sauces, and great vegetables. Nota bene—beware the local intellectuals who cleave to this place. "We're all living in the world's history," one actually said one night. Maybe it would've sounded better spoken into a cell phone. • 242 E. 81st St. (212-517-8826). (E)

★ Fireman's of Brooklyn
Shelly Fireman, the man behind midtown's nostalgic Brooklyn Diner, expands on his outer-borough fantasy with this seafood house, which features a shrimp, oyster, and chowder bar; market-fresh fish; and something called the "lobster shanty" (an outsize beauty buried under a hill of fried onion ribbons). Landlubbers go for "Bubba Fireman's chicken." • 1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-838-7570). (M)

★ Fred's at Barneys New York
Normally, the stuff served in department-store eateries is the gastronomic equivalent of the final clearance bin. Not so at Fred's. Its menu is an amalgam of au courant Italian (lovely pasta), guilt-ridden dietetic (chicken soup rendered fatless), and size-6-be-damned deli (chicken livers and pot roast to plotz from). Almost as satisfying as snatching up an irregular with no pulled threads. • 10 E. 61st St. (212-833-2200). (M-E)

★ Lobster Club
If you name your restaurant after a sandwich, like Anne Rosenzweig did, it better be good. Her lobster club on brioche is better than that, but it's not what keeps us coming back. The menu, like its creator, is whimsical, provocative and amusing, and we can't get enough of her garlicky Provençal fries, her meatloaf of the day, and her designer matzoh brie with smoked salmon and dill. • 24 E. 80th St (212-249-6500). (M-E)

Nino's
Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

★ Payard Patisserie & Bistro
You'll never shiver and blush the way Francois Payard's Nôtre Dame, Fontainbleau, St.-Honoré, or devilish chocolate tart make you when they hijack your taste buds to a place they've never been and will forever yearn to return. If all this sweetness weren't enough, Payard's chef Philippe Bertineau concocts first and second courses that match François's touted thirds. • 1032 Lexington Ave. (212-717-5252). (M-E)

Sel & Poivre
Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

Tanuki
People in the restaurant business and Upper East Side sushi savants have already discovered this source for top-quality sushi and sashimi. Chef Tatsuya Nagata, formerly of Bond Street, demonstrates a deft hand with dishes like soy-marinated Chilean sea bass and specials like squid with uni paste, and oxtail stew. • 1466 First Ave., nr. 76th St. (212-452-1066). (M)

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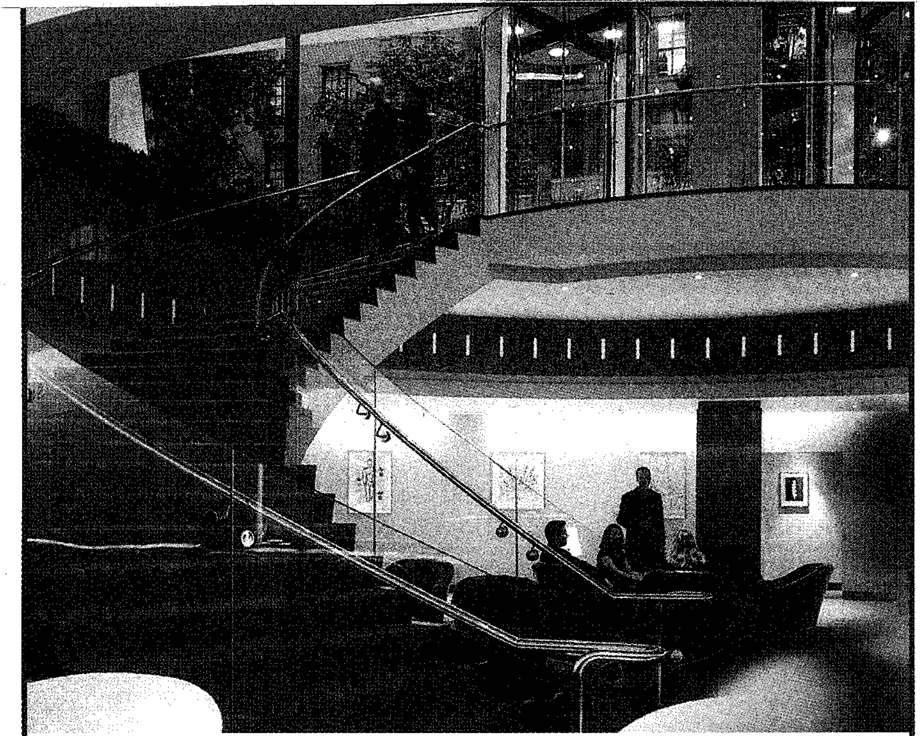

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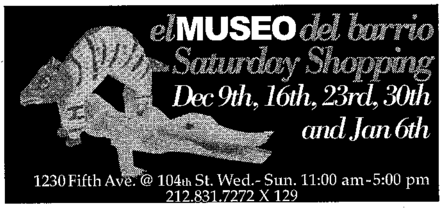

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Trata
With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood, this bustling Upper East Side sideline of the Patsy's pizza chain offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. • 1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ Barney Greengrass
A Formica-clad shrine to smoked fish and everything else that defines the dying art of Jewish appetizing. No one's stopping you from ordering cheese blintzes, chopped liver, even caviar. But that's not why you're here. You're here to savor Barney's raison d'être: the holy trinity of sturgeon, smoked salmon, or Nova scrambled with eggs and onion, with an H&H bagel and cream cheese on the side. • 541 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 86th St. (212-724-4707). (M) ($)

★ Jean Georges
Nothing and no one at Jean Georges steals center stage from the wondrous creations of its extraordinary chef, Jean-Georges Vongerichten. If you're okay with such divine supplication, prepare to be open-mouthed whenever you're not chewing. Nothing you encounter will fail to dazzle, from the simplest dish of asparagus and morels au jus to the unexpected combo of sweetbreads en cocotte with ginger and licorice. • 1 Central Park West (212-299-3900). (E)

La Vela
A comfortable, unpretentious spot for Northern Italian food. Worth sampling are the zuppa di pesce, the risotto, and the wild-mushroom, black-olive, and goat-cheese pasta. • 373 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 77th St. (212-877-7818). (I)

★ Ruby Foo's
In what might be Auntie Mame's duplex during her high mah-jongg period, the black-bean sauce is vibrant and the wok steamed lobster is worth its weight in jade. And regardless of where you sit, you have to walk down the Mamescent staircase at least once. Screaming "Live! Live! Live!" is optional. • 2182 Broadway, at 77th St. (212-724-6700). (M)

Sapphire Indian Cuisine
A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. • 1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M)

Brooklyn

★ Diner
Even before you've finished your first cocktail, you notice the floor is tilting. But the disequilibrium contributes to the charm of this snug, just-rehabbed-enough 1927 dining car. A beyond reductive menu offering "soup," "burger," "spinach," and at brunch, "hot cereal" misleads at first. Don't believe the lack of hype. Chef Caroline Fidanza shows her dexterous hand with specials like succulent pork loin with caramelized cipollini and tender lamb ragout with white-bean gratin. • 85 Broadway (718-486-3077). (M)

★ Peter Luger
Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own Peter Luger credit card, or bring cash. • 178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).

Queens

Water's Edge
Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and elegant space to partake of fancy American fare like roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached in orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel and chervil. Jacket required. • 44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E)

cue

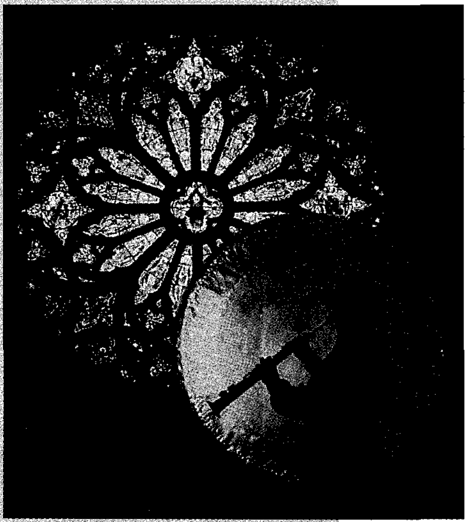
InConcert

Edited by Tara Pepper

Preview

A Holiday Buffet

Whatever you're preparing to celebrate, take note as you put out the menorah or unwrap ornaments for the tree: The city's concert halls are dusting off plenty of glittering musical baubles over the next two weeks. **John Eliot Gardiner** has spent the year performing all 198 of Bach's cantatas on the holidays they were composed for, traveling around the cathedrals of Europe with the Monteverdi Choir and the English Baroque soloists. They conclude their pilgrimage with three concerts in St. Bartholomew's Church from December 25 to 31. When the family's eggnog-fueled renditions of "Jingle Bell Rock" start to grate, take in the **Vienna Choir Boys**' performance of this and other carols and folk songs from around the world at Carnegie Hall on December 17. Dizzy from spinning dreidels? They're not the only Hanukkah game in town. Learn to sing a Hasidic *niggun* (a wordless tune) and chant traditional songs with **Basya Schechter** and the world-music ensemble Pharaoh's Daughter at the Kitchen on December 16. They'll take the audience through Jewish spirituals from North Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe, accompanied by flute, guitars, cello, and percussion. If your turkey didn't turn out right and Grandma won't stop asking why you aren't married yet, there are plenty of musical escapes, including nontraditional ones. **Richard Barone** intersperses folk and jazz with the Handel score in *The Downtown Messiah,* on December 15 at the Bottom Line (the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra present the traditional version at Carnegie Hall on December 20 and Avery Fisher Hall on the 23rd). If the answer is "none of the above," there remains the winter solstice, celebrated by a Brazilian singer, an Irish piper, and an Armenian percussionist, who team up with the **Earth Band** (pictured) to take us on a theatrical journey through the longest night of the year and hail the return of the sun, in the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, December 14 through 16. (See "Classical Music.") T.P.



Photograph by Jeff Day.

Classical Music

"A City Singing at Christmas"
The American Boychoir joins the Choir of St. Patrick's Cathedral for holiday songs. Audience participation is encouraged. 12/13 at 7:15. • The Cathedral of St. Patrick, Fifth Avenue at 50th St. (212-753-2261); free.

The American Symphony Orchestra
Premieres David Israel's *El Yerushalayim,* a three-part symphony with libretto from the writings of twelfth-century Judeo-Spanish poet Judah Halevi. 12/14 at 8.• Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $25.

The New York Philharmonic
Garrick Ohlsson is the soloist in Brahms's Piano Concert No. 1 in D minor; Kurt Masur conducts Schumann's Symphony No. 2. 12/14–12/18 at 8, 12/19 at 7:30. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $19–$80.

Paul Winter and the Earth Band
Are joined by soloists from around the world for a nondenominational celebration of the Winter Solstice broadcast on local NPR stations. 12/14–12/16 at 7:30. • The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Ave., at 112th St. (212-662-2133); $28–$65.

The Downtown Messiah
Allan Pepper and Stanley Snadowsky spice the score with jazz, rock, and blues, directed by Richard Barone. 12/15 at 7:30 and 10:30. • Bottom Line, 15 West 4th St. (212-228-6300); $22.50.

Basya Schechter
Combines Jewish spirituals with Mediterranean percussion in a workshop concert with musical ensemble Pharaoh's Daughter. 12/16 at 1. • The Kitchen, 512 West 19th St. (212-255-5793); $10, $5 children.

Amanda Roocroft, Soprano
Makes her U.S.-recital debut performing Schumann, Strauss, Debussy, and Britten in the "Art of the Song" series. 12/17 at 2. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $25.

The Vienna Choir Boys
Run the vocal gamut from Purcell and Brahms to folk songs to traditional carols ("O Tannenbaum," "Adeste Fideles," "Let It Snow," and others). 12/17 at 7:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $18–$43.

The Chamber Music Society
Brightens winter evenings with the complete *Brandenburg* Concertos. 12/17 at 5, 12/19 at 7:30. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-875-5788); $27.50–$37.50.

Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra
Perform Handel's *Messiah.* 12/20 at 2. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $18–$43. 12/23 at 2. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $30–$65.

Opera

The Metropolitan Opera
Der Rosenkavalier closes 12/14. *Der Fliegende Holländer* is performed through 12/20. *Fidelio* will run until 1/11, *Il Trovatore* until 1/13. Call for program details and times, or visit www.metopera.org. • The Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); *Il Trovatore* premiere, $50–$275, all other performances, $18–$180.

Dicapo Opera
Presents Manuel de Falla's *La Vida Breve,* though 12/17. Please call for times. • Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. (212-288-9438); $40.

Amato Opera
Performances of *La Bohème* continue until 1/7. • Amato Opera, 319 Bowery (212-228-8200); $25, $20 students and seniors.

Dance

Ballet Hispánico
Premieres two new works and revives William Whitemer's *Ola Chica* and Ann Reinking's *Ritmo y Ruído.* Through 12/17, call for times. • Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $36.

Neither
Doug Varone and dancers premiere his new work set to music by Michael Nyman and Bach. Through 12/17, Tuesday through Saturday at 7:30 and 9:30, Sundays at 6:30 and 8:30. • The Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 97 Orchard St. (800-965-4827); $40.

Ballet Tech
Eliot Feld's company presents "Notcracker," two family programs including *Papillion,* a dance of caterpillars and butterflies, and *Coup de Couperin,* a recent premiere. 12/19–12/31 at 7, matinees at 2. • The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $35.

Alvin Ailey
Performances continue through 12/31 with the premieres of *Chocolate Sessions, Sweet Bitter Love,* and *Following the Subtle Current Upstream.* Please call for times. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); $20–$75.

New York City Ballet
Balanchine's *Nutcracker* continues until 12/31. Please call for times or log on to www.nycballet.com. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-307-4100); $16–$85.

Ground Rules

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

cue
Nightlife

Edited by Ethan Brown

Performance

Sonic Songbooks

You couldn't take the Southern California dreaminess out of **Rickie Lee Jones** (pictured) or the Texas twang out of Steve Earle. Nor would you want to. But both, no matter what abandoned cars or jails they've lived in, seem to reside in a Greenwich Village of the mind. The early-sixties literary-folkie-hipster vibe is especially strong on their current albums—music by two grown-ups who nearly blew their lives and talents and sound eager to use every precious moment of their fourth chances. Jones covers Hoagy Carmichael and Steely Dan on *It's Like This*, turning the latter's "Show Biz Kids" into slinky funk. Earle's *Transcendental Blues* is no less soulful but gleefully louder. Earle writes images worthy of Flannery O'Connor and preaches against the death penalty, but he also loves to just plain rock and (Celtic) reel. The pair, now recording for the Greenwich Village-based Artemis Records, play close to their spiritual home this week—Jones at Irving Plaza, Earle opening for Dave Matthews at Madison Square Garden, both on December 12 and 13.

CHRIS SMITH

Concerts

Cypress Hill
12/14 at 8. • Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). $24.50 advance, $27.50 day of show.

Dave Matthews Band
12/12–12/13. With Steve Earle and the Dukes. • Madison Square Garden, 34th St. and Seventh Ave. (212-307-7171). $45.50.

Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion
12/16 at 5:45. • Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-840-2824). $35–$40.

Medeski Martin & Wood
12/16 at 8. • Community Theater, Morristown, N.J. (212-307-7171). $25.

The Offspring
12/17 at 7:30. With MxPx. • Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). $28.50.

Paul Winter's 21st Annual Winter Solstice Celebration
12/14–12/16. • The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Ave., at 112th St. (212-662-2133). $65 for reserved seats; $28 and $38 for general admission.

A Tribute to Frank Sinatra
12/12 at 8. • Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-840-2824). $35–$40.

Vienna Choir Boys
12/16 at 8. • New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark N.J. (888-GO-NJPAC). $12–$48.

Small Stages

92nd Street Y
12/15: Jon Raney; Ed MacEachen. • Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. For showtimes and tickets, call 212-996-1100.

Arlene Grocery
12/11: Johnny Young. 12/12: The Even Tide; Players Club. 12/13: Juice O; David Moriales. 12/14: Abbadessa; Skyrocket. 12/15: Jeff Saphin; Ford Falcon Blue. 12/16: Went; Clyde. 12/17: Splitz Tasker. 12/18: KG Denert; Yes Virginia. • 95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633).

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
12/11: WAR. 12/16-12/17: Bo Diddley. 12/22–12/23: Ronnie Spector's X-mas Party. 12/24: Joanna Connor. • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line
12/12: A Truckstop Christmas. 12/15: The Downtown Messiah. 12/16: The Smithereens. 12/22: Buster Poindexter. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom
12/11: PJ Harvey. 12/13: Nina Gordon. 12/15: Blonde Redhead. 12/16: The Dictators. 12/19: Fab Faux. 12/21: Vic Thrill. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Fez
Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Through December: Kiki & Herb in "Jesus Wept." 12/17: Betty Brooklyn Kwanzaa. • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza
12/12–12/13: Rickie Lee Jones. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub
An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. 12/17 and 12/19: Darlene Love and 12/22: "Love for the Holidays." 12/11 and 12/18: B. D. Wong. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory
12/13: Songs: Ohia; Sally Norvell. 12/14: Uz Jsme Doma; Barbez. 12/15–12/17: Henry Threadgill & Make a Move. 12/18: The Mahavishnu Project. 12/19: Phillip Johnston. 12/20: Karen Mantler. 12/21: Drums & Tuba. 12/22: Odetta. 12/23–12/28: Jewish Music Festival. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.

Makor
12/12: Yale Strom's Hot Pstromi. 12/12: Mark Dresser Quartet. 12/13: Norah Jones Trio. 12/14: Richie Havens; Dayna Kurtz. 12/16: IT Girl! 12/17: Ted Rosenthal Trio. 12/19: Songwriters Hall of Fame Showcase Night. 12/20: D.J. Lux. 12/21: Over the Rhine; Jess Klein; Micah Green. 12/23: D.J. Shakey; D.J. Small Change; D.J. Ulysses. 12/26: Makor Open Mike. 12/28: Avyatar Banai; Eran Zur; Amir Lev. • 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).

Maxwell's
12/14: The New Mexicans. 12/15: 7 Minds; Talking To Loi. 12/19: The Hot Snakes; Les Savy Fav; Pixel Tan. 12/20: Ours; French Kicks/Cecilia. 12/21: Darby Jones. 12/22: Simi; the Kidney Thieves; Every Damn Day. 12/23: Granian; Mercy River. 12/27: Elio Schiavo & the Uptown Rulers. 12/28: Good Charlotte. • 1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge
12/11: Philip Foxman & Prime 8. 12/12: Fake Brain; Methusalah Jones. 12/13: The Strokes. 12/14: Tiajuana Caravans. 12/15: Jon Langford & Six Proud Walkers. 12/16: Les Savy Fav. 12/17: Pernice Brothers. 12/19: Mink Lungs. 12/20: Hot Snakes; the Strokes. 12/21: Topaz; the Squad. 12/22: Diva Machina; Etro Anime. 12/27: The Strokes. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

S.O.B.'s
12/16: Brazooca. 12/22: Baba Olatunji. 12/25: Grupo Caribe. 12/28: Bitches Brew. • 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

The Supper Club
A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Every Friday and Saturday evening at 8: "Tropicana Fever." • 240 W. 47th St. (212-921-1940).

The Village Underground
Former Tramps booker Steve Weitzmann brings his eclectic sensibility to a new smoke-free club in the West Village. 12/13: John Cale. 12/14: Hot Snakes. 12/18: 3rd Message; Prince Paul. • 130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

Wetlands
Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 12/12: Sound; Eclipse. 12/15: Mindface; One Time. 12/16: Emma Gibbs Band; Coby Brown Group. 12/20: Everton Blender. 12/22: Milo Z. • 161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600).

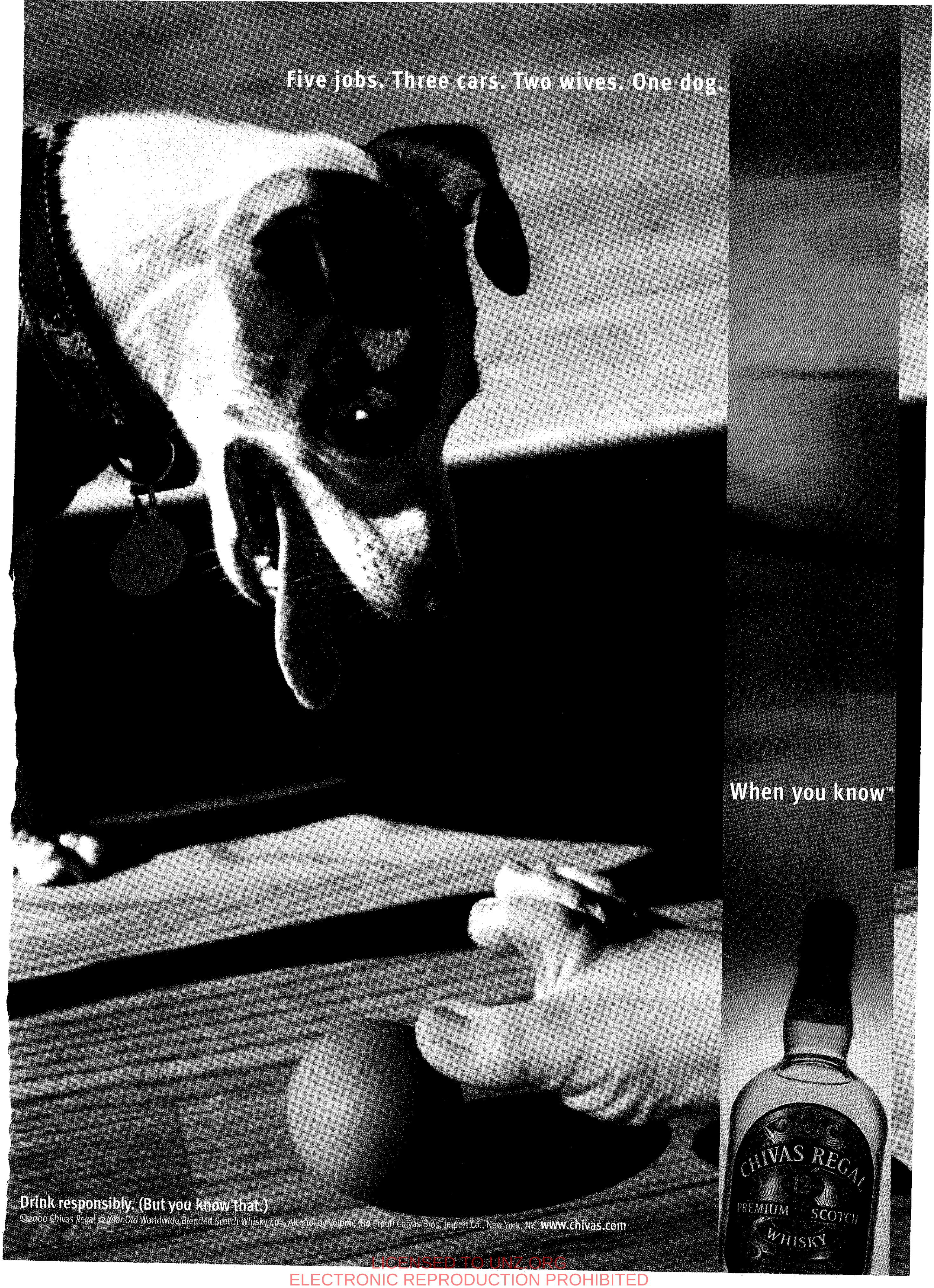
Clubland

"Journey"
House music gets a great new home Fridays in

Ground Rules

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Photograph by Anna Lisa.



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WHISKY

Brooklyn: Caviar Studios, a loftlike space with a cute, intimate dance floor and a cozy lounge. Before midnight, the party has an after-work pickup vibe, but late in the evening, the space fills with dreadlocked dancers and head-wrap-wearing divas dancing to the sweet grooves of D.J.'s like Kim Lightfoot and Kalim Shabazz. • Caviar Studios, 46 Washington Ave., bet. Park and Flushing Aves., Brooklyn (718-222-9456).

Centro-Fly
Once uncomfortably dominated by the bottle-service set, Centro-Fly has now achieved a near-perfect mix of Wall Streeters with loosened ties, D.J.-bag-carrying dance-music fanatics, and tracksuited deep-house heads. Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. The second Friday of every month: House party "N'Ice." Third Friday of every month: House party "Con-fu-sion" with talented out-of-town D.J.'s like Chicago's Pierre. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant." The last Saturday of every month, Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Roger Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house music's finest. • 45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).

Cheetah
A jungle-themed club with a spacious dance floor and a small yet powerful sound system. Thursdays: "Clique," where the socialite set grooves to hip-hop beats. Fridays: "GBH" ("Great British House"), a party that, thanks to great guests like Tony Humphries, Ashley Beedle, and the D.J.'s of "Miss Moneypenny's," has quietly become one of the best nights out in the city. Saturdays: Thumping tribal house and live percussionists at "Cherchez La Femme." Sundays: Nicky Siano of "Twelve West" joins "Boys Nite" D.J. Merritt for "Mardi Gras." The emphasis will be on deep-house and garage classics. • 12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).

Limelight
The Limelight is officially back from the dead thanks to its powerhouse weekend nights, which see the likes of Detroit techno icon Jeff Mills, D.J.'s from techno club Tresor, and the trance heavies of the "Gatecrasher" crew grace the turntables. The mazelike club's renaissance comes just in time, as other megaclubs like Twilo have become uncomfortably packed, verging on the claustrophobic. 12/15: DJ Heaven. 12/21: Tricky. 12/22: Alexi Delano. 12/23: Gatecrasher. 12/24: Ken Ishii. 12/28: "Holiday Bass" with Peshay; Aphrodite; Shy FX; more. • 660 Sixth Ave., at 20th St. (212-807-7780).

SPA
The health-and-wellness theme (white walls, bathrooms designed to look like saunas) is thankfully mostly unobtrusive, and the crowd is thankfully not excessively chic. SPA promoter Steven Lewis maintains the kind of balance between office *zhlubs*, club kids, and A-listers he pulled off so nicely in the early days of the now-defunct Life. Wednesdays: "Big Bad Dodgy Disco" with new wave and rock spun by D.J. Paul Sevigny. Thursdays: Superpromoter Erich Conrad's "Glam" with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Marc Ronson and Grandmaster Flash spin hip-hop and R&B for the A-listers at "Hollywood 2000." • 76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).

Twilo
Twilo is the superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno, with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key alternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. • 530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).

Vinyl
Vinyl is still a dance-music purist's paradise, but the recent quality-of-life crackdowns have taken an enormous toll on the club's once extraordinarily open vibe: the invasive pat-downs at the door by security give the place a feel that's more Rikers Island than Paradise Garage. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now-legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Jazz

BAMcafé
12/14–12/15: Brooklyn Saxophone Quartet. 12/16: Direct Messengers Band. 12/21: Patrick Grant Group. 12/22: Next Legacy Orchestra. 12/23: Francis M'bappe. 12/28: Keba "Bobo" Cissoko and Tamalou. • 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4111).

Birdland
Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: From 5:30 to 7:30, David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra. 12/13: Carla White. 12/14–12/16: Lee Konitz Quartet. 12/20: Vic Juris Trio. 12/21: Jimmy Bosch & "Salsa-Dura." 12/22–12/23: Freddie Hubbard. 12/27: Rachel Z Trio. 12/28: Guy Morgan Big Band. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note
With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 12/11: Steve Slagle Quartet, with Joe Locke. 12/12–12/17: Ray Brown and "Super Bass." • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

City Hall
Fridays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).

Detour
With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. • 349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).

"Highlights in Jazz Presents: A Tribute to Bucky Pizzarelli"
12/14 at 8: With Howard Alden, Gene Bertoncini, Ken Pepplewski, Bernard "Pretty" Purdie, Frank Wess, Frank Vignola, Marlene Ver Planck. • Pace Downtown Theater, 3 Spruce St. (212-307-7171). $20.

Iridium
In the surreal basement across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with an extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 12/12–12/17: Paul Motian, Paul Bley, Gary Peacock. 12/19–12/24: World Saxophone Quartet. 12/26–12/31: Steps Ahead. • 44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).

"Jazz Insights: A Satchmo Centennial Celebration"
Lecture and performance series hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. All lectures begin at 7:45. 12/12: Dan Morgenstern. • The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5783). $35.

The Jazz Standard
A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 12/12–12/17: The Larry Goldings Trio. 12/19–12/24: Houston Person and Etta Jones. 12/26–12/30: The Tommy Flanagan Trio. • 116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).

Rose Center
12/15: David "Fathead" Newman Quartet. 12/22: Jimmy Greene Quartet. The Rose Center is open until 8:45 p.m. Fridays; suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. • American Museum of Natural History, Central

Photograph courtesy of P.O.W., Inc.

Performance

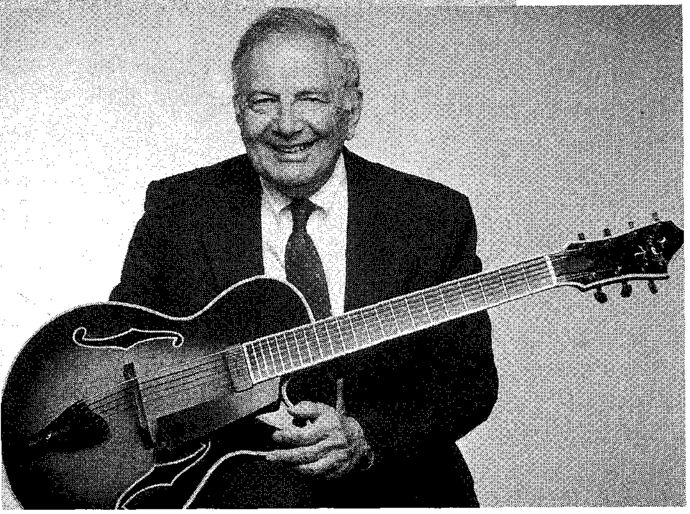
Cale Force

John Cale (pictured) lent a sense of avant-classicism to the Velvet Underground in the sixties, a sparse production style to albums by Jonathan Richman and Iggy Pop in the seventies, and an epic sensibility to high-concept albums like *Songs for Drella* in the early nineties. Cale hasn't been as prolific in recent years, but when he makes a rare solo appearance at the brand-new downtown hot spot Village Underground on December 13, he'll no doubt draw upon his two decades worth of solo work, which runs the gamut from the angry punk-influenced *Sabotage (Live)* to the nouveau electronics of *Music for a New Society*. (See "Small Stages.")

Tribute

Swing Set

You could say that **Bucky Pizzarelli** (pictured) got into the swing game late: Though he's worked with the likes of Benny Goodman, he earned his rep as a virtuoso guitar player in the decidedly non-swing era of the sixties and seventies. No matter. On December 14, fellow jazzmen like Howard Alden, Gene Bertoncini, and Frank Wess will pay tribute to the swing king at the Pace Downtown Theater as part of the consistently solid series "Highlights in Jazz." (See "Jazz.")



Courtesy of Bucky Pizarelli.

Park West at 79th St. (212-874-3929).

Showman's Café
Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul-jazz and funkified hard bop every night. No cover; two-drink minimum. • 375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941). $.

Small's
Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 a.m.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565). $.

Sweet Basil
An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch, with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 12/12–12/17: T. K. Blue. • 88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).

Tonic
Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.

Village Vanguard
Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 12/12–12/17: Jackie McLean. 12/19–12/24: Cedar Walton Trio. • 178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club
Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and midnight. • 82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).

Carolines on Broadway
In Times Square, just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 12/13: "The Goon Squad." 12/14–12/17: Thea Vidale. 12/15–12/17: Lewis Black. 12/20: "Chicks With Shticks.". 12/21–12/22: MEGA 97.9 FM's "El Vacilon on Broadway." 12/23–12/24: Rich Vos. 12/26–12/31: Colin Quinn. • 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100). $12.50–$24.50; two-drink minimum.

Comedy Cellar
A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. 12/11–12/17: Colin Quinn; Kevin Brennan; Nick DiPaolo; Dave Attell; Godfrey. 12/18–12/24: Colin Quinn; Godfrey; Nick DiPaolo; Billy Burr; Dave Attell. 12/25–12/30: Colin Quinn; Nick DiPaolo; T. Sean Shannon; Sherrod Small; Godfrey. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Comic Strip
Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. • 1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).

Dangerfield's
Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. • 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).

Gotham
A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun., "New Talent" Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30, with a $10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30, with a $15 cover. Two-drink minimum. 12/13: Robert Klein. 12/15–12/16: Jim David; Gary Greenberg; Billy Burr 12/20: Robert Klein. 12/21: Gotham All-Stars. 12/22–12/23: Lewis Black. 12/27: Robert Klein. 12/28: Gotham All-Stars. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

Stand-Up New York
Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. • 236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).

Upright Citizens Brigade Theater
All shows $5, unless otherwise noted. 12/11: New Team Harold. 12/12: So, I Killed a Few People; The Third Degree. 12/13: Ali Farahnakian; UCB. 12/14: Harold Night; Cagematch. 12/15: Mr. A$$; The Swarm; Respecto Montalban. 12/16: Respecto Montalban; Feature Feature; Kathie Lee Gifford and the Legion of Good Vs. Ricky Martin and the Loca Power Team. 12/17: Asssscat. 12/18: New Team Harold; Tami Boy! 12/20: The Gifted and Talented Program. 12/21: Harold Night; Cagematch. 12/22: Andrew Secunda's One Woman Show; The Swarm; Respecto Montalban. 12/23: Respecto Montalban; Feature Feature; Kathie Lee Gifford and the Legion of Good Vs. Ricky Martin and the Loca Power Team. 12/26: So, I Killed a Few People; The Third Degree. 12/27: UCB. 12/28: Harold Night; Cagematch. • 161 W. 22nd St. (212-366-9176). $.

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel
The Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat. Sunday, 12/17: brunch with Judy Barnett. 12/12–1/6: Andrea Macrovicci. • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place
A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Mondays at 8 through 12/18: Jim Caruso and Billy Stritch. Through 12/31: Lillias White. • 450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle
Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).

Cafe Pierre
Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years of American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. • Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books
Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. • 156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).

Don't Tell Mama
What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? Fridays in December: "The Next Big Broadway Musical." Saturdays in December and New Year's Eve: Ron Poole. • 343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.

Feinstein's at the Regency
Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $50 Tues.–Fri.; $75 for the early show on Friday and all shows on Saturday; $50 food-and-drink minimum. Through 12/30: Michael Feinstein. • 540 Park Ave., at E. 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).

FireBird Café
The theater district's newest postshow snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $15 minimum. Through 12/30: Baby Jane Dexter in "Making Every Moment Count." • 365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).

Judy's
This cozy, friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 12/11: Ruben Ramos in "Waiting for Life." 12/12: Audrey Lavine in "This Is No Dream." 12/13–12/14: Stephanie Cheek and Mark Leggieri. 12/15: Ruby Rims. 12/16: Judy Kreston and David Lahm. 12/17: Naomi Miller; Eastern Standard Time; Marieann Meringolo. • 169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).

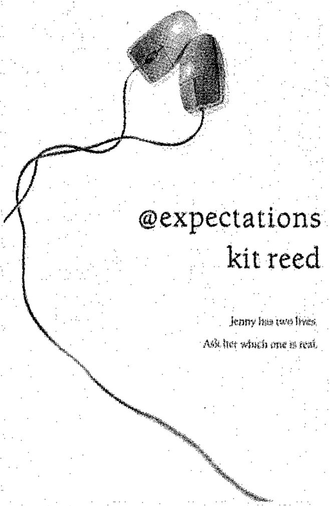
TheMix

Edited by Boris Kachka

In Print

The Story of 01110010

In the early eighties, **Kit Reed** heard that she could get a discount computer through Wesleyan University, in Middletown, Connecticut, where she teaches. "As a writer, I was very suspicious of them," she says. "But my husband, Joe, was getting one, and I realized if I didn't it would ruin our marriage." They both took the plunge—the marriage, fortunately, remained intact—and Reed tried hard to learn how to work the thing. "My mother had a Walkman that she never figured out how to run," says Reed. "I never wanted to be like that." Eventually, she gave up; a more successful digital experience would come later, when she got addicted to playing her daughter's Zork, an early, popular text-based game. Then, in 1994, a friend told her about LambdaMOO, a MUD (multiuser domain, or dungeon, or dimension, depending on whom you ask) started at Xerox's PARC labs. "I said, 'I don't have time for that,' " says Reed. "And of course, I was right." She got hooked anyway, spending a dozen hours a week in the environment with thousands of people, discussing ideas, making friends, making other friends to learn the dirt on the first ones. From this experience came *@expectations* (Forge; $22.95), Reed's novel about a married woman who finds herself in love with her onscreen boyfriend in a MUD named StElene. The material falls outside her usual purview, which includes a dozen novels, short-story collections, and a series of mysteries as Kit Craig. "Now, though," she says, "I know a lot of geeky things I didn't know before." Reed will be reading at KGB on December 20. (See "The Written Word" for details.) VANESSA GRIGORIADIS


@expectations
kit reed
Jenny has two lives.
Ask her which one is real.

Radio Highlights

"Paul Winter's Winter Solstice Celebration"
NPR broadcasts the Grammy-winning "earth music" saxophonist's twenty-first annual celebration of the longest night, for which the Cathedral of St. John the Divine goes pagan. Musicians take full advantage of the lofty space, playing from various points and altitudes with the 28-foot tall "Tree of Sounds"—laden with bells, gongs, and chimes—as their centerpiece. Brazilian vocalist Luciana Souza is this year's star human attraction. • Two broadcasts: Live, 12/15, 8–10 P.M., WFUV, 90.7 FM; Taped, 12/21 (the solstice), 8–10 P.M., WNYC, 93.9 FM.

The 30th Annual John Schwartz Christmas Show
WNYC's "guru of the American Standard" invites musical stars—including famed cabaret singer Michael Feinstein—to perform amid all the trappings of a holiday party, from cocktails to witty repartee. Writers Marie Brenner and Pete Hamill help provide the latter. • 12/17, noon–4 P.M. WNYC, 93.9 FM.

The Hanukkah Special
Larry Josephson hosts an exploration of the cultural, religious, and political traditions of the holiday. Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, talks to Josephson about the real story behind Hanukkah—an ancient battle between secular, assimilated Jews and the ultrareligious Maccabees. A Boston choral group performs varied Hanukkah music. • 12/23, 8–9 P.M. WNYC, 93.9 FM.

"A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols 2000"
A live 90-minute transatlantic broadcast carries the famous Christmas Eve service from King's College at Cambridge University. Having aired annually since 1928, this is the longest-running program still on the radio. • 12/24, 7–8:30 P.M. WNYC, 93.9 FM.

Lectures and Panels

Fernando Botero
The internationally known Latin American artist makes a rare public appearance at a reception marking the publication of *Fernando Botero: Monograph and Catalogue Raisonné, 1975–1990.* Botero will autograph copies of the book and meet his admirers, while the gallery exhibits monumental sculpture by Barbara Hepworth, Jacques Lipchitz, and Henry Moore. • 12/12, 6–8 P.M. Marlborough Gallery, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900); free.

Shirin Neshat and Shahzia Sikander
The two New York–based artists—Neshat is Iranian, Sikander, Pakistani—discuss the representation of Islam and gender issues in their work, with the Asia Society's Vishakha N. Desai moderating. • 12/12 at 7 P.M. The Lighthouse International, 111 E. 59th St. (212-517-ASIA); $15, $10 Asia Society members.

From Sumerican Economics to Global Capital
Subtitled "Bioengineering and the Final Enclosure," the Anarchist Forum's December lecture and open forum are presented by Peter Lamborn Wilson, an expert on Sufi philosophy and host of WBAI's "Moorish Orthodox Radio Crusade." • 12/12 at 7:30 P.M. Brecht Forum, tenth floor, 122 W. 27th St. (212-979-8353); any donations welcome.

Ron Hollander
The author of *All Aboard! The Story of Joshua Lionel Cowen & His Train Company* signs copies of his book and offers free train appraisals to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Lionel, the famed model-train manufacturer. • 12/14 at 5 P.M. Hammacher Schlemmer, 147 E. 57th St. (212-421-9000); free.

Milton Glaser
The world-famous designer celebrates the publication of his most recent book, *Art Is Work: Graphic Design, Interiors, Objects, and Illustration,* by lecturing on the influence of technology and commerce on design. Followed by a reception and book signing. • 12/14, 6:30–9 P.M. Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8400); $65, $55 members.

"Artist Conversations: Landscape Painting"
Panelists Leon Goldin, Chris Semergiess, Altoon Sultan, and Flavia Bacarella discuss the artist's use of landscape as a source of inspiration. • 12/14, 6:30 P.M. National Academy of Design Museum, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-369-4880); free with $8 admission.

The American Psychoanalytic Association
During its autumn 2000 convention, the association hosts two concurrent open forums at the Waldorf-Astoria. On the third floor, in the Astor Salon, five panelists discuss "Freud's Vienna, Fin de Siècle: Innovation and Turmoil Within Its Art, Culture, and Politics." Meanwhile, in the Grand Ballroom, several psychoanalysts speak at a panel entitled "Glass Ceiling, Glass Walls: Race in America," touching on possible psychological explanations for racial prejudice and the various social ramifications involved. • 12/15, 11 A.M.–1:30 P.M. The Waldorf-Astoria, 301 Park Ave., at 51st St. (202-628-6544); free.

The Written Word

Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly
The famed cartoonist and the editor discuss *Little Lit: Folklore and Fairy Tale Funnies,* a collaboration featuring fable-inspired comics by top cartoonists, and sign copies of the book. • 12/12 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

***Oxford American* debut at KGB**
John Grisham's Mississippi-based magazine inaugurates its KGB reading series with a group reading by four of its best writers—Roy Blount, Hal Crowther, Tony Early, and William Gay—along with Southern Comfort, humor, and, unaccountably, sword-swallowing. *OA* editor Marc Smirnoff and former editor John Sullivan (now at *Harper's*) introduce the writers. • 12/14 at 7 P.M. KGB Bar, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Scott Malcomson
The author, a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker* and the New York *Times,* reads from and discusses *One Drop of Blood: The American Misadventure of Race,* his recent book about the delineation of racial categories throughout U.S. history. • 12/14 at 7 P.M. Housing Works Used Book Café, 126 Crosby St. (212-334-3324); free.

"Boys II Men"
This reading on gay themes doubles as a launch party for a new queer-arts Webzine, *Spoonfed:Amerika:Online.* The 'zine's founder, Tom Drymon, reads, as do playwright David Blaustein and Ted Cornwell, a journalist, novelist, and poet. • 12/19 at 9 P.M. Bouche Bar, 540 E. 5th St. (212-475-1673); free.

Kit Reed
The novelist and short-story writer reads from her latest novel, *@expectations,* about Internet infidelity. • 12/20 at 7 P.M. KGB Bar, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

"Half-Jewish"
Daniel Klein and Freke Vuijst, the married couple responsible for *The Half-Jewish Book: A Celebration,* read from and discuss their successful book. Alix Strauss moderates the discussion, followed by a Q&A and a book-signing. • 12/20, 7:30 P.M. Makor, 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000); $5.

Galt MacDermot performs Paul Dunbar
MacDermot, the award-winning composer, has set the poetry of Paul Dunbar—a pioneer in African American literature—to song, and invites several singers to join him in their performance. • 12/22 at 8 P.M. Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $25.

Special Events

Tours

"The Nooks and Crannies of Greenwich Village"
Washington Mews, Patchin Place, and MacDougal Alley aren't on the usual Village tour—nor, for that matter, are the Lockwood DeForest House or the Pen and Brush Club. But they're stops on this trip, which focuses on lesser-known landmarks and literary sites. • 12/16 at 1 P.M. Meet at the southeast corner of Fifth Ave. and 12th St. (732-270-5277); $10.

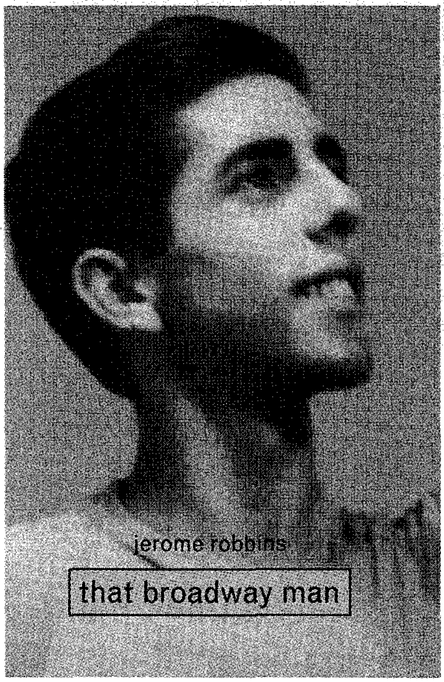
Annual Christmas Bird Count
In its ninety-second year, this bird-watching expedition sponsored by the Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences encompasses all areas of the borough and lasts all day, so dress warmly. The outing ends with a bird roundup at the institute. • 12/16. Call 718-727-1135, ext. 16 for meeting time and place. Roundup at Staten Island Institute of Arts & Science, 75 Stuyvesant Pl.; free.

Mount Vernon Hotel Museum by Candlelight
The beautifully preserved nineteenth-century hotel, which began in 1799 as a stone carriage house on a 23-acre estate, becomes the setting for a period tour including traditional balladeers, dulcimer music, and hot cider. On Saturday, 12/16, there's a holiday candle-making session at 3 P.M. and a festive holiday concert featuring period music and clothing at 8 P.M. • Tours, 12/14–12/16 at 4:30, 5:15, 6, 6:45, and 7:30 P.M. Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden, 421 E. 61st St. (212-838-6878); tours $10, candle-making $6, concert $12.

In Print

Steps to Greatness

The first-ever book on the life of the late Jerome Robbins may be the ultimate authorized biography (written by a close friend of 30 years entrusted with exclusive rights to some of his journals), but Christine Conrad's **Jerome Robbins: That Broadway Man, That Ballet Man** is by no means the conventional treatment. It reads like a controlled stream of consciousness, not a series of revelations. For that, we'll have to wait for Greg Lawrence's pop-psych exposé, aptly titled *Dance With Demons,* out next spring. Here, the story of the choreographer's life and work is essentially a smartly designed reshuffling of Robbins's own scrapbook of photos, letters, and journal entries, linked by Conrad's terse narrative and her subject's recorded thoughts: Chapter 1 begins, "When I was a child, art seemed like a tunnel to me. At the end of that tunnel I could see light where the world opened up, waiting . . ."



Exhibits

"A Portfolio of New York: 12 Views by Edwin Davis French"
French, the famed bookplate engraver, was commissioned to create twelve copperplate engravings of contemporaneous New York views, including monuments like City Hall, which he made between 1894 and 1897. All of them are on view here. • 12/13 through 3/18/01. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672); $7.

"*Toccata for Toy Trains:* A Holiday Installation"
Designers Charles and Ray Eames created dozens of experimental short films, of which this exhibit presents ten—including *Parade,* a six-minute pageant of mechanical toys, and the title film, a fourteen-minute short about a toy train's journey through a miniature landscape. • 12/20 through 1/10/01. The Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (212-935-3960); free.

Other Events

"A Christmas Song Fest"
Germanophiles have their own special place to go during the holiday season. Christmas carols, both American and German, as well as German oldies, will be sung, with plenty of old Bavarian atmosphere, traditional food, live piano music, and *Glühwein,* or mulled wine. Also, "lots of *Gemütlichkeit* [coziness]," promises the Steuben Society of America, which hosts the event. • 12/15, 6:30–10 P.M. The Liederkranz Club, 6 E. 87th St. (212-249-0125); $25 advance, $30 at the door.

Center for Book Arts' Holiday Sale
Hand-bound books, date books, journals, greeting cards, decorative boxes, and other handicrafts are on sale at the center's loft studio's annual holiday fair, while book artists demonstrate their printing and bookbinding techniques. Music and refreshments will also be on hand. • 12/16, 11 A.M.–5 P.M. The Center for Book Arts, 28 W. 27th St. (212-481-0295); free.

"Ball on Christmas Eve" for Jewish Singles
For Gentiles, Christmas Eve means cozy family togetherness, but for Jews it means. . . maybe a menorah lighting, or a movie in an empty theater? But there's the self-proclaimed "nation's largest Jewish singles event" (with an attendance of around 3,000 a year, possibly not an exaggeration). D.J.'s play on four floors of Webster Hall, offering a choice of hip-hop, lounge, seventies, or eighties music. At midnight, a trapeze artist performs high above the grand ballroom. All this and many a hookup opportunity may just take your mind off the ultimate hegemonic hol-

Game Week

HOME ░ AWAY ▓

	Mon: 12/11	Tue: 12/12	Wed: 12/13	Thurs: 12/14	Fri: 12/15	Sat: 12/16	Sun: 12/17
GIANTS							DAL ESPN 8:35 P.M. ▓
JETS							DET FOX 1 P.M.
KNICKS		MIN FSNY 7:30 P.M.		TOR MSG 8 P.M. ▓	UTA MSG 7:30 P.M.		MIL MSG 6 P.M.
NETS		SJ MSG 10:30 P.M. ▓				ATL FSNY 7:30 P.M. ▓	SAC FSNY 7:30 P.M.
RANGERS		WAS METRO 7:30 P.M.		LA FSNY 10 P.M. ▓	ANA MSG 10:30 P.M. ▓		
ISLANDERS	ATL FSNY 7:30 P.M.				TOR FSNY 7:30 P.M.	OTT METRO 7 P.M. ▓	
DEVILS					MON METRO 7:30 P.M.	PHI MSG 7 P.M. ▓	

	Mon: 12/18	Tue: 12/19	Wed: 12/20	Thurs: 12/21	Fri: 12/22	Sat: 12/23	Sun: 12/24
GIANTS						JAX CBS 12:30 P.M.	
JETS							BAL CBS 1 P.M. ▓
KNICKS		ATL MSG 7:30 P.M. ▓		BOS MSG 8 P.M.	PHI MSG 7 P.M. ▓		
NETS			BOS FSNY 7 P.M. ▓	MIL METRO 8 P.M. ▓		MIA FSNY 7:30 P.M.	
RANGERS	FLA MSG 7 P.M.		STL MSG 7 P.M.			NAS MSG 1 P.M.	
ISLANDERS		CAR FSNY 7:30 P.M.		DAL FSNY 7:30 P.M.		COL MSG 7 P.M.	
DEVILS			DAL ESPN 8 P.M.		FLA FSNY 7:30 P.M. ▓	TAM METRO 7:30 P.M. ▓	

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B	■	O	■	C	■	B	■	C	■	A	■	E	■	C
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E	R	E	■	N	O	N	E	T	■	■	S	O	N	S	■	■	T	O	L	D

iday. • 12/24, 8 P.M.–4 A.M. Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (212-459-4321); $25 in advance, $30 at the door.

Sports

Heavyweight Explosion
Another edition of this monthly heavyweight series at the Hammerstein Ballroom. Fight card to be announced. • 12/13 at 7:30 P.M., Hammerstein Ballroom at the Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (212-564-4882 or 212-307-7171).

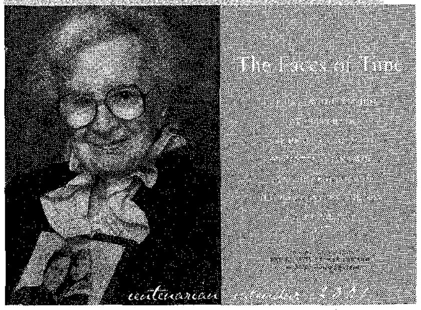
MAC Youth Development Indoor Track Meets
The Metropolitan Athletic Congress hosts Friday-night meets for youths of several age groups. Visit the MAC's Website, www.mactrack.org, for scheduled events, fees, and youth categories. • 12/15 and 12/22 at 6 P.M., Armory Track and Field Center, 216 Fort Washington Ave., at 186th St. (212-227-0071).

Holiday Four-Miler
The New York Road Runners Club hosts this annual four-mile run through Central Park. Starts at East Drive near 99th St., finishing at 97th St. Numbers and long-sleeve T-shirts may be picked up at the NYRRC, 9 East 89th St., 12/14 and 12/15 from noon to 7 P.M.; 12/16 from 11:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.; or on race day from 7:30 to 9 A.M. Prizes awarded in several age groups. Nonmembers $17; limited race-day entries $22. Visit the club's Website, www.nyrrc.org, to register or for more information. • 12/17 at 9:30 A.M. (212-860-4455).

In Print

19th-Century Foxes

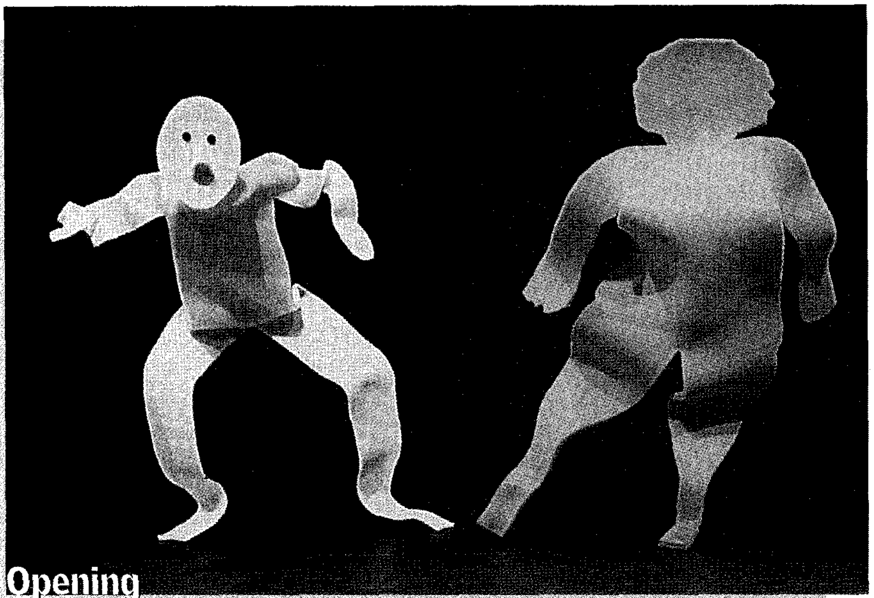
Ms. September prides herself on "not looking a day over 80"; Ms. December fought for women's rights—as a suffragette. What these models may lack in allure, they can make up for by giving your bulletin board a certain historical context. To help fund a study on aging and longevity, the Hebrew Home for the Aged at Riverdale has marked the (technically correct) turn of the millennium by pinning up a dozen of its triple-digit beauties on *The Faces of Time*, a 2001 centenarian calendar. You won't find these glamour gals (and guys) alongside the younger, more lightly clad specimens at most bookstores; call 718-581-1234 or consult www.hebrewhome.org to purchase.



Photograph courtesy of the Hebrew Home for the Aged at Riverdale.

Kids

Edited by Susan Avery



Opening

Silence Is Golden

Sometimes things really are better left unsaid. It's a sensory reprieve to be able—especially during the holidays—to turn off the sound in our ultraloud environs. So we welcome back **Mummenschanz**, the Swiss mime troupe that, riding the wave of all things seventies, is back in town. In this case, however, it's not just another show to add to the "I've seen that" list: Mummenschanz stays with you. (There's not a New Yorker over 30 who doesn't remember that toilet-paper-mime commercial from way back when.) The new production, *Mummenschanz Next*, opens December 21 with, for the first time, a company of four. Newcomer Raffaella Mattioli is a European-trained ballerina whose best friend, Floriana Frassetto, one of the company's founders, had been nagging her for years to join the group. Now 49, Mattioli finally decided to make the leap. "As a dancer, you show yourself onstage," Mattioli says during a rehearsal break. "Here, you're always hidden. In dance, you follow the music. Here, nothing is fixed." Fifty-six-year-old Bernie Schürch, another originator, craves that side of the show, adding that the children in the audience make each performance come alive. "We provoke, and the audience reacts," he muses in a haunting Bela Lugosi exaggerated breathiness. (Maybe it's better that he doesn't speak.) "And the action of the audience will re-provoke the action onstage." Provocative kids? Nah, none in New York. (See "Children's Events.") S.A.

Children's Events

We Have Nothing to Say

Kitschy? Yeah. Interesting, entertaining, and memorable? Definitely. *Mummenschanz Next,* the latest rendition from the mime troupe that played with toilet paper in the seventies, comes to New York after a four-year hiatus. At Alice Tully Hall. • 12/21- 12/31; 1941 Broadway, at 65th St. (212-721-6500); $45 & $27.50.

Shlomo and Shoshana's Wedding

If Christmas Day means a trip to Chinatown and a movie, try this variation. The Eldridge Street Synagogue, right near Chinatown, hosts "Klez for Kids," a two-hour show of klezmer music (the lively, traditional stuff played at Jewish festivities). The agenda includes a re-creation of a shtetl wedding. Refreshments and a tour of this 112-year-old shul follow. • 12/25 from 1 to 3 P.M.; 12 Eldridge St. (212-978-8800); $10, $6 for students and seniors.

Christmas Past

Be transported back to the 1890s with the Magic Lantern show, a "Reel to Real" program at Lincoln Center. A mesmerizing slide show includes the sights and sounds of a horse-drawn carriage, cozy parlor gatherings, and old-fashioned street life. Host Terry Borton will spin Victorian Christmas tales, and actress Sally Sherwood will re-create herself in the likeness of vaudeville's Anna Held and Lillian Russell. • 12/16 at 11:30 A.M. and 2 P.M.; Walter Reade Theater, 165 W. 65th St. (212-875-5370); $15, $7.50 for kids 4–14.

Christmas + Hanukkah = Canadian Brass

The Canadian Brass, which combines virtuosity with humor, appears in a one-hour family performance at Long Island's Tilles Center for the Performing Arts. The program of traditional Christmas and Hanukkah music is specifically designed to bring orchestral performance to children. • 12/16 at 2 P.M.; Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus, Route 25A in Brookville (516-299-3100); $20.

Kwanzaa's in the Air

December 26 is the day that storyteller Christine Campbell regales kids in Central Park with fascinating tales and talks about the history of Kwanzaa. They'll even get to make gifts of beaded necklaces and place mats. On 12/28, the Kwanzaa celebration continues with live music and singing. • 12/26 and 12/28 from 3:30 to 5 P.M.; Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, 110th St. near Fifth Ave. (212-860-1370); free.

Pharaoh the Festive

Pharaoh's Daughter, a New York–based band, combines Jewish spirituals with the texture of the Mediterranean. At a performance at the Kitchen, band leader Basya Schechter will teach kids and adults to sing a Hasidic *niggun* (a wordless tune) and a *taitsch* (a Yiddish chant) and pick up some words in Ladino (a mixture of Spanish and Hebrew). The audience will also be invited to play Middle Eastern rhythms on percussion instruments. • 12/16; 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793); $10, $5 for kids.

Waxing Poetic

Bring home a colorful candle for the holidays. The Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden hosts a session to create rolled candles from honeycomb wax. Materials are nontoxic, and no heat is involved in the process. • 12/16 from 3 to 4 P.M.; 421 E. 61st. St. (212-838-6878); $6, $4 for kids 11 and younger.

Kaleidoscape

We New Yorkers want things big, but the folks at Ringling Bros. are betting that we'll embrace a one-ring circus under a tent in Bryant Park. Blending contemporary theater with classic circus antics, Kaleidoscape features award-winning clowns, envy-producing acrobats, a spitball juggler, and a set of human golden statues that perform Herculean feats. A reception with the performers begins an hour before showtime. (To up the circus ante, check out the holiday window display around the corner at Lord & Taylor on 39th and Fifth.) • Through 12/31; Sixth Ave. bet. 40th and 42nd Sts. (877-9-BARNUM); $20–$75. Couch seating is also available.

The Competition's a Circus

Circus Oz, the Australian troupe with a rock-and-roll edge, is also in town. True to their reputation as edgy daredevils, these rogues shoot an entire orchestra into outer space, hula-hoop into a swirl of flames, and do a 100-yard dash across the ceiling. When not flying around, the versatile group joins the band and plays along. • New Victory Theater, through 1/14/01; 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200); $10–$35.

Old Faithful Circus

What started out back in 1977 in Battery Park City has become a veritable New York institution. The Big Apple Circus at Lincoln Center includes traditional acts: an equestrian display, trapeze swinging, speed-juggling, hand-balancing, clowns, a dog act, and a magic show. More important, it's the one kid-friendly thing to do on New Year's Eve evening. (The 12/31 show starts at 9:30 P.M. and goes past midnight.) It's a not-for-profit venture, so proceeds go to performances of the Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit, a group of professional circus people who perform at pediatric hospitals and other places around the country. • Through 1/7/01; at Damrosch Park at Lincoln Center, 62nd St. bet. Broadway and Amsterdam Ave. (800-922-3772); $12–$62, New Year's Eve $40–$125, kids 11 and younger half-price.

DECEMBER 18–25, 2000—VOL. 33, NO. 49. Periodicals postage paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. Editorial and business offices: 212-508-0700. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to New York, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Subscription rates in the U.S. and possessions: 50 issues, $42. For subscription assistance, write Joseph Oliver, New York Magazine, Subscription Department, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Or call (800) 678-0900 or (212) 447-4749. Printed in the U.S.A.

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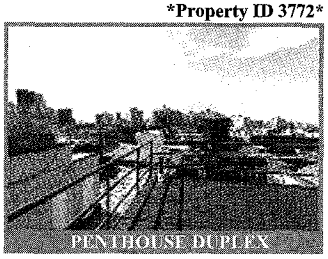

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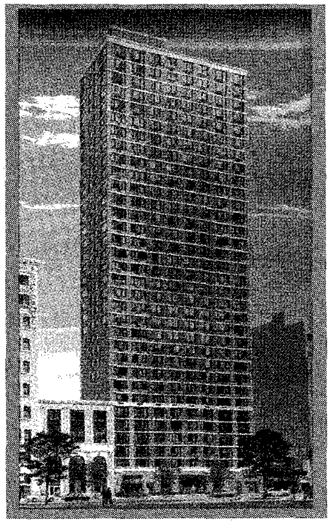

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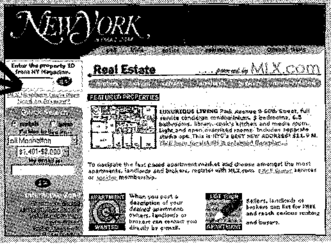

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Open Sity View, all renovated, very sunny and bright Ask: $365K cc:$382/Mo
RT: $400/Mo price to sell! **Danny Anitian**
Manhattan Apartments 212-378-2336

Property ID 3658

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New York City's Premier Real Estate Company

74th St E. 3 BR/3BA 2 BALC - $1.5M
This mint, move-in cond. apt. features a gigantic living room perfect for entertaining, hi ceil. Master bedroom suite with jczi and sep shower, closets galore, W/D, spectacular views.
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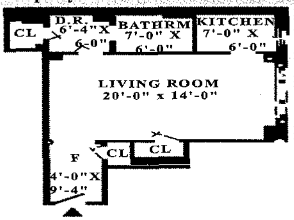

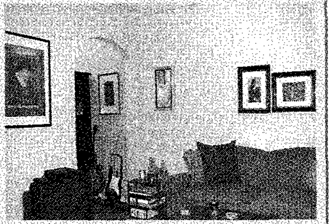

West Village Charm 299 W12th St. Apt. #3B
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midtown

Property ID 3659

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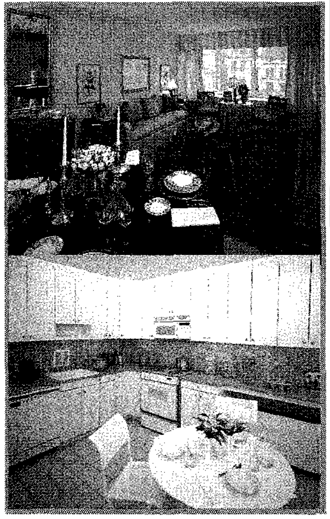

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Property ID 3662

GVW/Christopher Street. *DM*
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$235K **Sawyer Smith**
Knickerbocker Village 377-5757 x223

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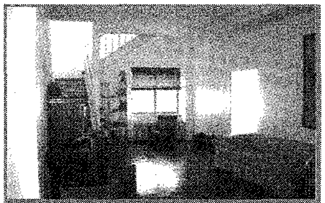

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...sales outside nyc

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Property ID 3664

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Cryder Hse Lux Waterfront Hirise
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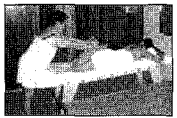

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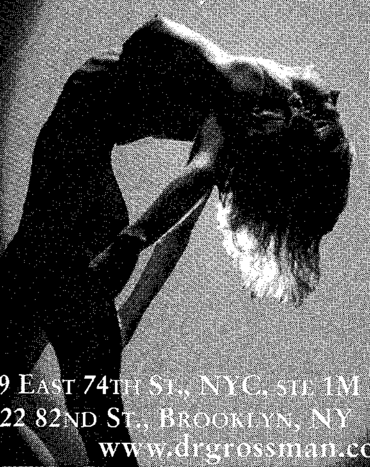

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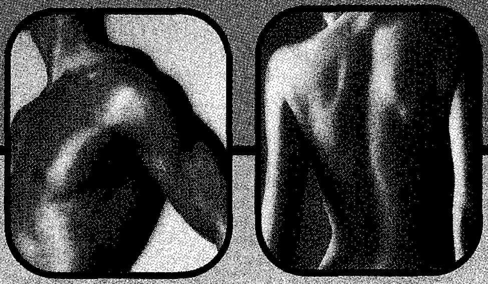

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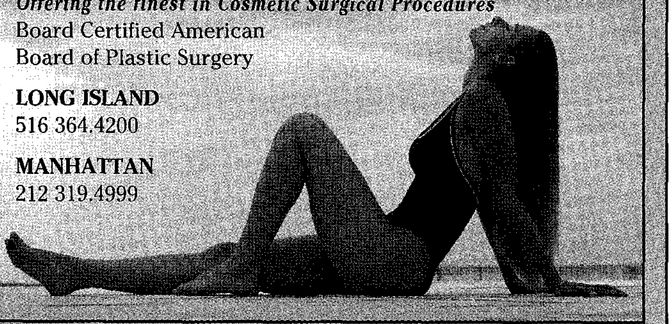

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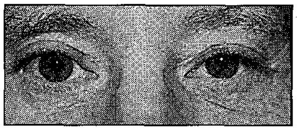
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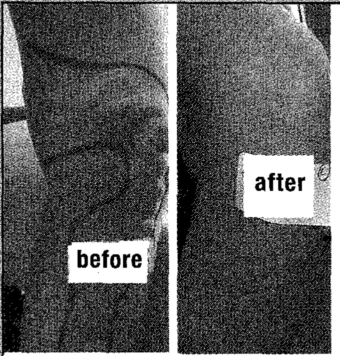

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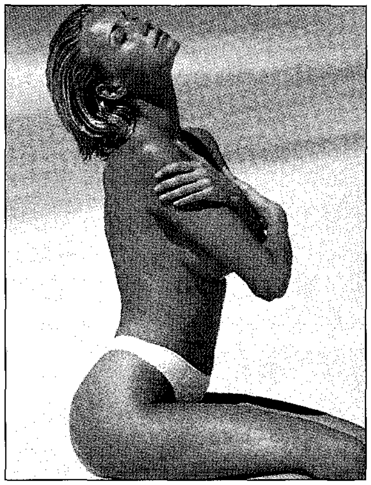

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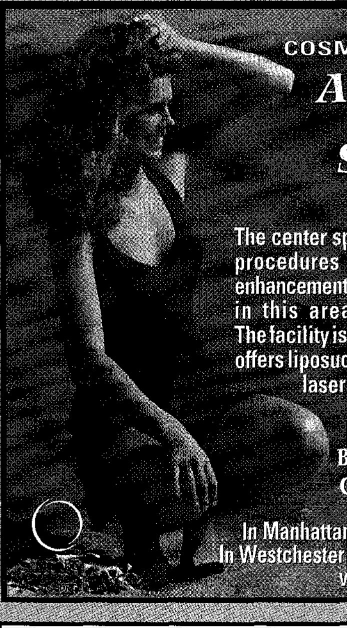

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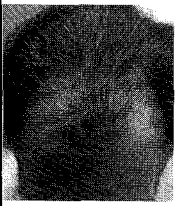

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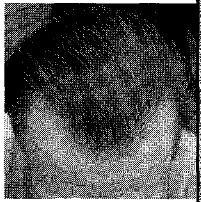

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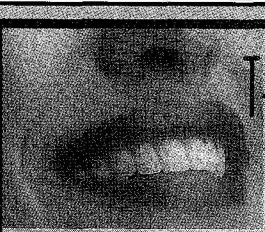

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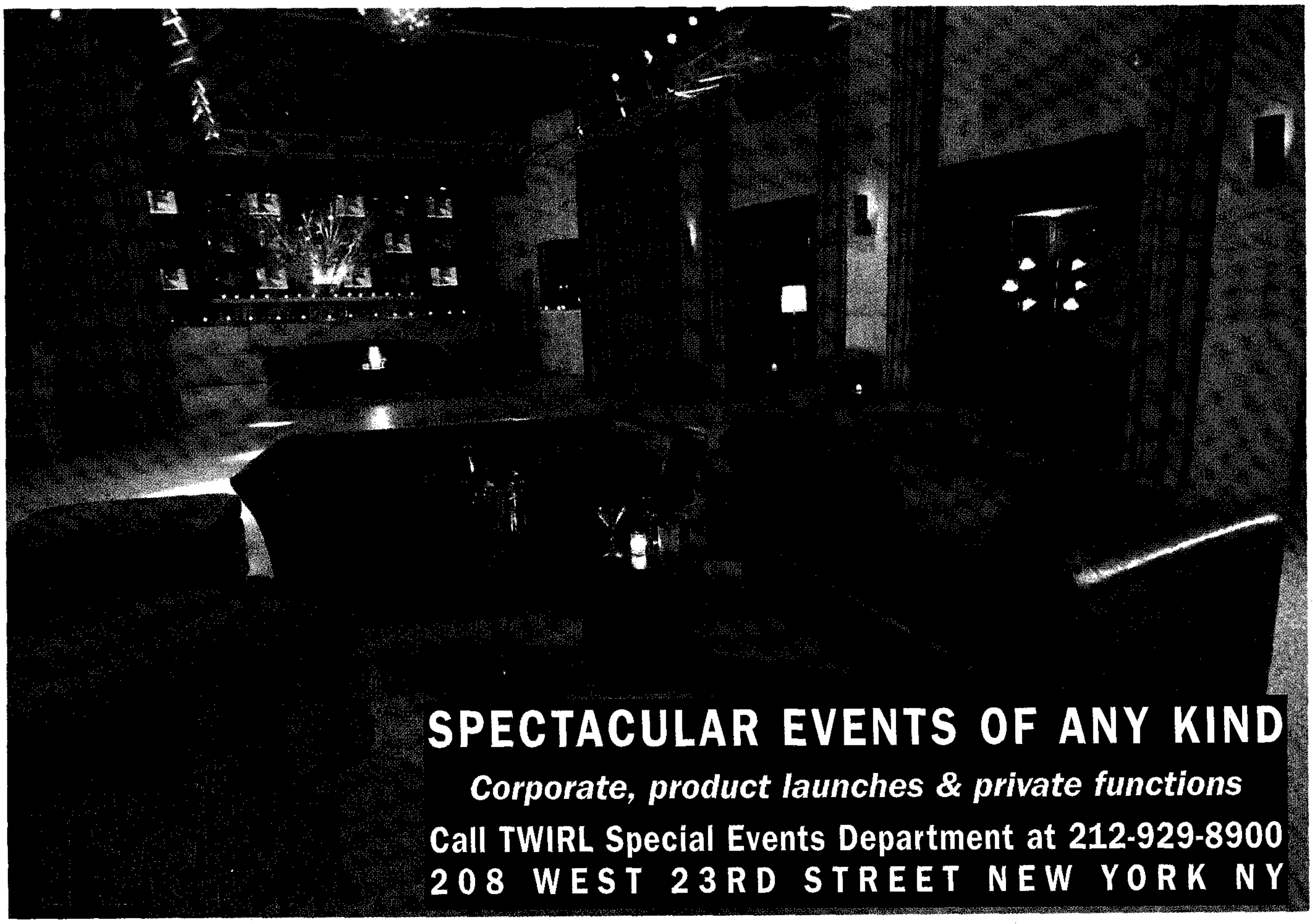
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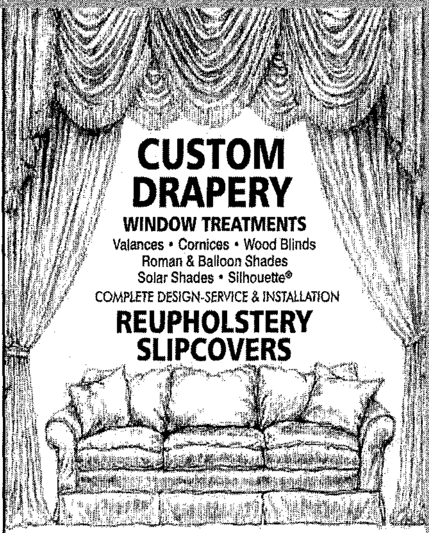

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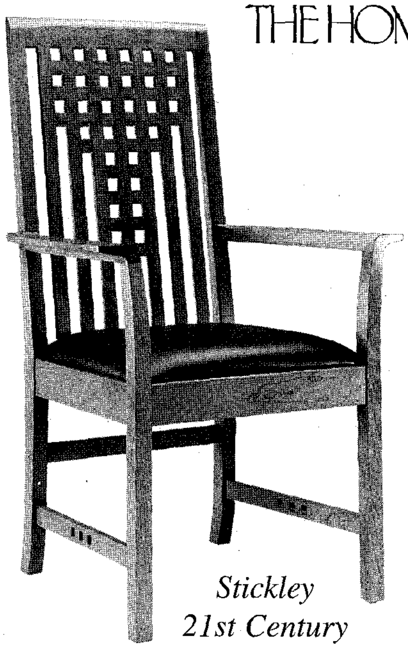

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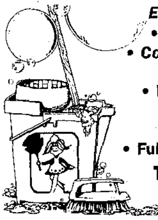

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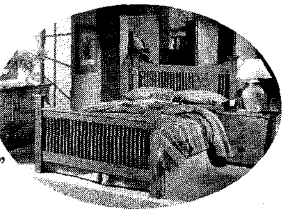

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Looking For Eastern European Lady—I am 47, 6'3" and physically fit, emotionally and financially secure, divorced, no children. Love borscht, strolling on boardwalk and dancing. Seeking lady, physically fit and thin, 33-44, with similar values that may possibly lead to marriage. Phone/recent photo if possible. 6038✉

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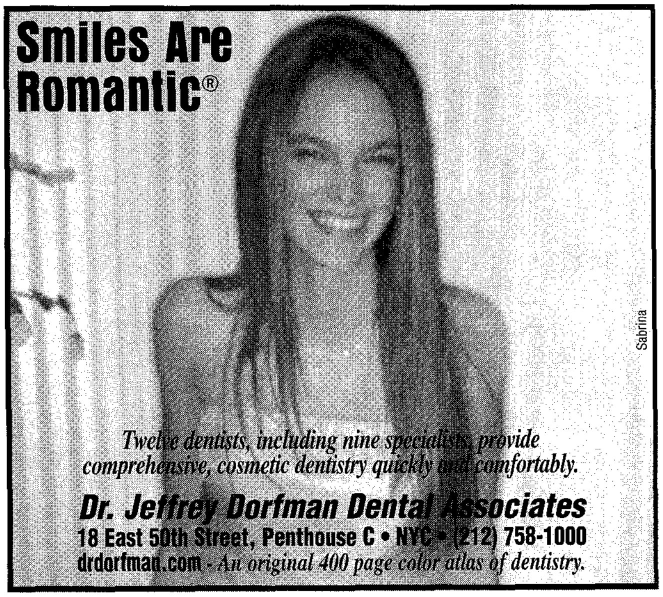
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Class Act Seeks Leading Lady—Successful entrepreneur, 48, 6', muscular, romantic, dynamic, creative, humorous and financially secure. I have a versatile range of interests including world travel, music, theater, dancing and sports. Seeking an intelligent, extroverted, buxom brunette, 30-45, of substance and style. Note/photo, please. 6108 ✉

Successful, Wealthy American—Businessman, semi-retired, early 60s, youthful, divorced, tall, good-looking, nonsmoker, European background, multilingual, residing in New York/Europe - enjoys good living and travel. Seeks tall, good-looking, caring, nonsmoker female under 50, for friendship and more. Kindly send note/phone/recent photo. 6135 ✉

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Unassuming, Low-Key Professional—Man, tall, Jewish, 60s, seeks youngish, tall, brainy/brawny, robust lady. 6053✉☎

Japanese Lady—46, seeks white male. Music, theater. Photo/note. 6054 ✉

Attractive Woman—Compassionate, intelligent, cultured, possesses good humor and curiosity. Seeks compatible man in his 60s. 6069 ✉

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Expert Hugger—Very attractive white male, 37, with herpes (infrequent), who is romantic, affectionate, adventurous, intelligent, loyal, congenial, seeks very attractive, slender, accomplished female for friendship, possible long-term relationship. Photo a must. 6088 ✉☎

Black Male MD—48, kind, seeks fit, educated female, any race, 23-43, interested in travel. Note/phone/photo appreciated. savant48@aol.com. 6039 ✉

Dichotomous Diogenes—Male Christian MD, 6'2", 185 lbs, 51 years old. Not your run-of-the-mill fish's bicycle. Professionally successful yet personally unfulfilled. Unpretentious, adventurous, caring, evolving and communicative. My passions include live music, long drives, documentaries. Searching again for a compatible, tall, thin Christian woman, aged 35-48. Must be nonsmoker, drug/disease-free. Prefer you be well-educated, independent, vivacious and spontaneous, with passion in pursuit of your own interests; willing and able to share them and yourself. Could you live a weekend without makeup or contacts? Paint a white door red? Change for the opera at a roadside McDonald's after a day of flea markets? Go to Paris for a week with a single carry-on? If so, join me for a Kojak moment. Written note and photo, please. Will reciprocate. 6078 ✉

33, Jewish—Seeks single white female. Will give my time, my love, my care. Box 231072, NYC 10023 avipc@aol.com

Italian Man—Good-looking, 48, marriage-minded business owner, looking for that special someone. Photo. 6076 ✉

Elegant, Upscale North Shore Beauty—Shapely and sweet, seeks attractive, kind man, 66-76, who needs to be loved - a man who is caring, intelligent and financially secure, to experience a quality life together. Please call. 6064 ✉☎

Attractive Financial White Widower—Secure, fit, athletic, 62, 5'8", wide interests, seeks attractive woman for long-term, caring relationship. Photo appreciated. 6133 ✉

Pretty, Petite, Lively—Warm, fit, happy children's book writer and teacher, who loves wonder and beauty of nature, city strolls, museums, plays, dancing, laughter and quiet times, seeks good man for loving partner, 50 and up, please. 6094 ✉

Nice Guy Seeks Valentine—Handsome, Yale-educated, Columbia MBA, 6', fit, mid 40s, fun. Desires one lady love to cherish forever. Phone/photo necessary. 6035 ✉

Sophisticated Caribbean Woman—Former fashion model, world-traveled, well-informed, fun-loving and affectionate. I am black, slim, elegant, 57 (look early 40s), 5'8 1/2" and in perfect health. I'm a Manhattan resident who enjoys all forms of the arts, stimulating conversations, cooking, dancing, hiking, etc. I seek a tall, sincere man of substance, over 55, who is ready for a real woman and a romantic relationship based on mutual love and respect. 6125 ✉☎

Paris—Extraordinary woman of beauty, spirit, intelligence, passion; radiant smile and eyes; elegant, slim, fit, international entrepreneur, singer; travel, art, cuisine, wine. Seeks remarkable, successful international man, with generous heart, expansive interests, for serious, evolved relationship only. Over 40. E-mail: grandereve@aol.com. 6022 ✉

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Single, Straight, Sane, Available—Jewish male, 45, lawyer, seeks female, 30-45, for fun times and more. 6124✉☎

Vivacious, Voluptuous, Attractive—Divorced Jewish female, mid 40s - enjoys music, theater, dancing, boating. Seeking tall, attractive, funny professional male. Nonsmoker. Note/phone/photo. 6083 ✉

Okay, I'll Try This Once—Successful male with presence, humor, hair and teeth, 5'11", 60s, great fun, family, friends. Seeks female, 45-55, who's self-assured, social, intelligent, with interests from beach to Beethoven, movies to moonlight. Can we share the simple life? Photo. 6118 ✉

If You Don't Take A Chance—You don't stand a chance. Sophisticated, shapely, gentle, terrific athlete, excellent physical shape, very attractive, well-educated, cultured, well-traveled, stylish, tall Jewish lady - seeking kind, cosmopolitan, successful gentleman, 45-57. 4.0 tennis player/avid skier is a plus. Honesty/sincerity/kindness is your real advantage. 6131 ✉☎

Bright, Attractive—Green-eyed Jewish lady, (212), seeks educated, cultured man, 65-75, for caring/sharing. 6079 ✉

White Male PhD—Seeks petite lady MD, DDS, JD, etc., of any race, under age 55. 6037 ✉ or M1218ny@aol.com

Petite Female Wanted—Single white male, 36, MA degree, physically fit, athletic, seeks intelligent, active, slim white female, 27-37. 6049 ✉☎

All I'm Missing—Is a picture of you on my desk. I'm a beautiful brunette female, single Jewish professional from northern NJ, 36, seeking sincere, handsome, intelligent, single Jewish professional male for serious relationship. Phone/photo. 6138✉

I Second That Emotion—NY MD, late 30s, professionally successful, financially secure, seeking that special someone to make my heart sing. I love movies, dining out, Motown and quiet evenings. If you're female, 25-35, slim, attractive (inside and out), and are looking for a bright, funny and caring person, I'm your man. Note and photo, please. 6128 ✉

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9 Indoor Rock Climbing 7:00 pm
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Romance And Adventure in 2001—Is the way to establish a great relationship. Divorced Jewish business exec, manly, 60s, virile, 5'10", 195 lbs, seeking a witty, sensual, trim, youthful female, attractive and curvy, to ignite the flame. (718) area. Send note/photo/phone. 6087 ✉

Quiet Places, Wide Open Spaces—43, slim, attractive female, athletic, Ivy grad, seeks mature male thinker with heart and soul, for companionship. Photo. 6032✉☎

Attractive Educator—Male, 54, fit, likes outdoors. Seeks Christian female, 30s-45. Note/photo. POB 3074, MT Vernon, NY 10553

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Beauty And Brains—38-year-old MBA, Jewish, stable, together, seeks established, verbal, educated man, to 45. Note/photo. ips723@aol.com. 6070 ✉

Truly Beautiful Woman—33, long blond hair, green eyes, shapely figure. Sincere, caring, down-to-earth, warmhearted. Seeks handsome, fit, Jewish, special man to share life with. Photo. 6058 ✉

Will You Marry Me?—This is a genuine proposal for the right woman. Looking for that special gal with the same values and goals as I have. I'm tired of being a bachelor (never married), and I'm ready to settle down and start a family. I'm 52, 5'11", Catholic, handsome, interesting, responsible and financially secure. Seeking a 30-40-year-old lady who wants to chat about these things over coffee. Please reply with photo and note. 6063 ✉

Are You Ready?—Tall, blond, youthful Jewish female, intelligent, warm, sincere; enjoys arts, theater, sports. Looking for a man, 48-60, kind, caring, considerate, to share good times and interests - with possibility of commitment. 6055 ✉☎

Outgoing, Confident, Happy Lady—35, 5'5", blond and fit, seeks loving, balanced, supportive life companion. Photo. 6066 ✉

Warm Up—At bachelor's South Beach condo. Please be Jewish, very attractive, up to 45. Photo appreciated. 6021 ✉☎

Handsome, Successful Businessman—41, 6'3", looking for that special someone, 30-38, for a committed relationship, possibly more. Telephone number/photo a must. 6024 ✉

Dance With Me—Interesting, fun-loving female, 53, tall, slender, fair complexion, enjoys occasional candlelight dinners and dancing the night away; movies that make me laugh, cry and hold my breath; pizza. Seeking male counterpart. Can do casual or serious. Photo/note, please. 6073 ✉

Physician—35, Indian, handsome, seeking lady for companionship and committed relationship. 6084 ✉☎

Blonds Have More Fun—But I can't do it alone. Classy beauty desires a man who is healthy, wealthy and wise. Photo. 6036✉

Thoughtful, Warm, Successful—Professional, 53, 6'1", 185. I am handsome, athletic, sophisticated, financially and emotionally secure. I enjoy my life and have many interests, including the arts, fine food and wine, the outdoors, ballet, opera, travel, skiing and general good times with friends. I have a fascinating job as a designer, builder, manager, and live in beautiful surroundings just north of the city. I care about my family and those close to me, and seek a slender woman with a vivid sense of herself and a deep capacity for physical and emotional intimacy. Photo/note. 6042 ✉

Female - Gorgeous And Talented Too—42, Jewish. Is there some special male out there for me? 40-52. 6077 ✉

Gay White Female MD—With many interests, seeks similar, classy, stable, sincere, nonsmoker, 45-50, gay white female. 6068 ✉

Beautiful Society Woman—34, seeks a woman who is feminine and gracious, for a special relationship. 6099 ✉☎

Are You A Music Teacher—In Brooklyn? Or an artist/elementary school teacher in Teaneck? Do you play a musical instrument/sing in a choir? I've been a successful teacher, youth leader, pianist, professional entertainer, synagogue cantor. I'm 40 plus, never married, and looking for you in NYC/NJ/CT, for Jewish home and family. If you are 30-40, love music and children, write me at: 6115 ✉

Pretty, Petite, Professional—Mom, 41 (of adorable, loving twin boys), 5'3", 117, fit, sparkling blue eyes, a big heart, warm smile, with sense of humor and zest for life. I love cooking, family life, music, dining out, travel (family/romantic getaways). I seek a partner, 40-49, nonsmoker, who is handsome, professional, financially secure, with similar interests, who desires a committed, loving relationship. Loving dads welcome. Note/photo, please. 6113 ✉☎

Romantic, Handsome CEO—45, 6', seeks lady, 30-47, with beauty, brains and a warm heart. Photo, please. 6067 ✉☎

Ready For Romance—Italian-American professor/writer, PhD, single, 65, 5'8", trim, vital, reflective. Enjoys theater, music, films, sports. Seeks intelligent, outgoing, slim, 45-plus lady with similar interests, for lasting relationship. Nonsmoker. Note/phone/photo, please. 6120✉

Beautiful, Bright Brunette—Unique combo of sexy, smart, spunky, sincere and soulful. Divorced/one child. Seeks down-to-earth, dashing man of my dreams, 35-45, with sense of humor. Photo. 6033 ✉

Very Nice, Attractive Japanese Lady—Intelligent, young 30s, Upper East Sider, warm, unique, world-traveled, conservative - loves music, dining out, boating, ballet. Seeks successful, happy gentleman (single, sincere, caring, relaxed, family-minded, generous, well-educated, pro-job, fit, no smoke/drug, financially secure), for "happy marriage forever". MD a plus. DOB/photo. POB 390, NY, NY 10028

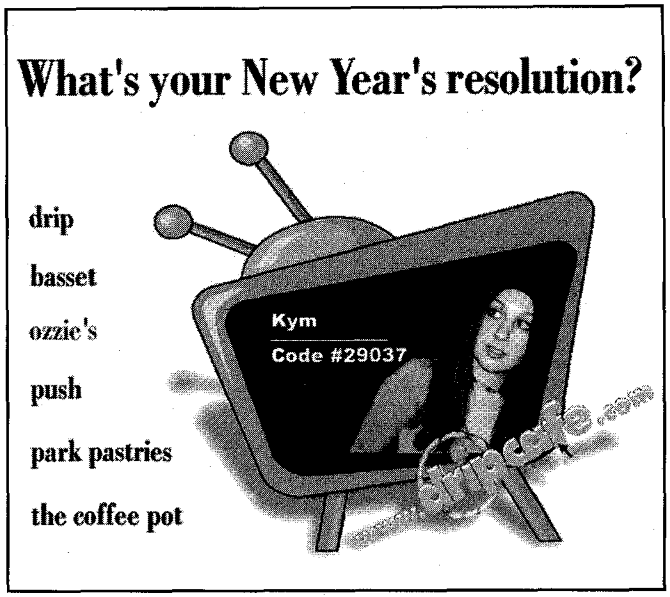
Beauty And Brains—Nice gal, 43, looking for nice guy, 40-50, a mensch. 6046 ✉

A Jewish Professional Male—47, very attractive, varied interests, fit and fun, in search of a professional female who is eclectic, artistic, slim, sensitive, intelligent, and who radiates a joie-de-vivre sense of self. Note/phone, please. 6096 ✉☎

Husband Wanted—Beautiful brunette, inside and out, 36, great catch, seeks white, successful, attractive male, 33-42, Wall Street type, to pamper and adore 'til death do us part. Should enjoy summers in Hamptons, want kids and a huge house in suburbs. Photo and note. 6045 ✉

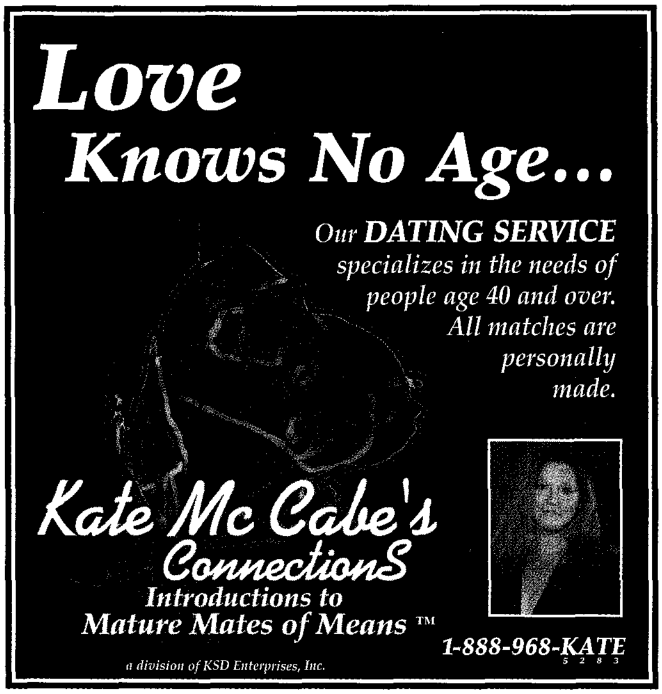
Sophisticated, Sultry, Athletic—Very attractive Jewish female, 5'7", very youthful, with varied interests including skiing, tennis, biking, jazz, wine. Seeks tall, 5'10" plus, 45-57, fit, established, commitment-minded soul mate with similar interests. Note/photo/phone. 6086 ✉☎

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town—A very good, 40s, upper Westchester woman hopes to find a nice, 53-plus man under her tree. 6075 ✉



Dynamic, Stunning Jewish Woman—5'7", slim and athletic, with long, beautiful hair, seeks kind, tall, athletic, generous man, 35-45, who loves the arts, loves to travel and wants to spoil me as I spoil him right back! 6057 ✉☎

Elegant, Charming—60-year-old Jewish widow, in great shape, with zest for life, enjoys dining out, movies, etc. Seeking a kind, caring, financially secure gentleman with sense of humor, for long-term relationship. 6095 ✉☎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Jewish But You Wouldn't Know It—Attorney, 40, 6'4", athletic, with diverse interests, pokes fun at almost everything, himself included. Seeks sassy, bright, open-minded, attractively fit, family-minded female, 28-40. Please do not call during Ranger games or other televised sports events. Please know the words to every Bruce Springsteen song as well. Call/note/photo. 6100 ✉☎

Beautiful Italian-American Woman—Photographer, 50s, seeks a man of similar age, with kindness, courage and passion, who can dine with a diplomat or eat on a dirt floor in India. He has a sense of humor and an artist's love of life. Please send snapshot and note. 6056 ✉☎

Single Jewish Male, 46—Handsome, athletic and successful guy seeks very bright and articulate Jewish woman wanting marriage and children within a relationship based on insight, humor and mutual respect. Note/photo. 6117 ✉

European Woman—44, 5'7", slim, witty, multilingual, seeks educated, well-traveled, multilingual, unpretentious male under 55. Photo/note. 6110 ✉

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Is There An—Interesting, affable male who enjoys classical music, jazz, walks in the city, home cooking and much more? He is sought by bright, slim, attractive, 50, divorced, financially secure, professional black female. 6048 ✉

Jerry Maguire—38, Jewish, 6'1", athletic, humorous, romantic, thoughtful, successful guy - enjoys movies, shopping, travel and sports. In search of single white female, 28-40, fun-loving, with similar interests, for long-term relationship. Photo/note. jerrymaguireinnj@aol.com 6092 ✉☎

Witty, Passionate, Beautiful—Slim, NYC widow seeks substantial, cultured, vital man, 60s. For love again. 6061 ✉

Very Attractive Jewish Male, 37—*Successful businessman from NJ, divorced,* 5'8", dark brown hair/eyes, nice build, honest, caring and romantic, seeks a very attractive Jewish female, 28-37, for serious relationship. Must be beautiful inside and out. Note/photo essential. 6040 ✉☎

Handsome, 40, Jewish—Southern-born, European-educated, own business, professional, slim, fit, fun - travel, many interests, Central Park West. Seeks that one special, sweet, pretty partner for romance and commitment. Photo? 6123 ✉

Tall, Handsome Doctor—6'2", very fit/slim, 41 (looks much younger), never-married (no kids), self-made and financially/emotionally secure. Considered very responsible, generous, passionate, com*municative and spiritual. Seeking one very* beautiful, well-bred, very slim/sensuous, chic woman (to 40), searching for the love of her life. Recent photo/note. 6136✉

Outstanding Looks, Brilliant Mind—Euro-born, Manhattanite, Renaissance man, law-educated, businessman, writer, Christian. Tops at tennis/sports, Verdi, Wagner. Reliable. Has fantastic flat and office; pool, gym in building. Seeks congruous partner who is beautiful, brilliant, multi-talented, Christian, active, independent and loyal, 20-40 years. Note/photo a must, please to: Gracie Station, POB 1472, New York, NY 10028

Seeking Mensch, 53-Plus—As best friend/lover. I'm very pretty, vivacious, bright, fit, fun, *multifaceted, love travel* and culture, (212). 6020 ✉☎

Handsome, Charming Gentleman—48, *intuitive, youthful, fit, Jewish financial* exec who loves ballet and jazz. Seeking charismatic, intelligent, available woman (35-50) with loads of personality, character and great legs. Photo. Jay12@home.com 6043 ✉☎

Seeking Sentimental Lady—Single white Catholic male seeks single white female, 25-45, for long-term relationship. Photo. POB 1389, Gracie Station, NYC 10028

Pretty, Petite Astrologer—Serene, soulful, sensual, vivacious 50, laughs easily, loves intensely, Yankee fan, publishing exec, seeks confident, self-aware man, with inner and outer world strengths, honest eyes, easy smile (any age). Starscribe@aol.com or 6052 ✉

Attractive Bachelor—35, 5'10", Christian background, Ivy-educated businessman, financially secure, seeks never-married woman, 26-33, in search of mature relationship. I'm intellectual as well as practical, love conversation, companionship, sharing good times. 6050 ✉☎

Dynamic Platinum Blond—Pretty, slim, witty, sexy... In search of one normal, terrific guy - 50s/60s. Are you out there? Make me a believer. No photo/no response. 6051 ✉

Less Than Perfect? Me Too—But I am a warm, open, positive, fun-loving, striking natural blond female, musician/teacher *with '50s values and a lust for life. You: a* man of like mind? Note/photo. 6098 ✉

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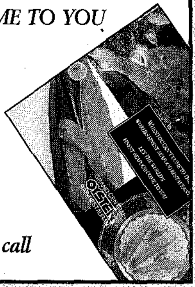

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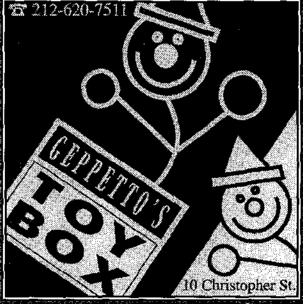

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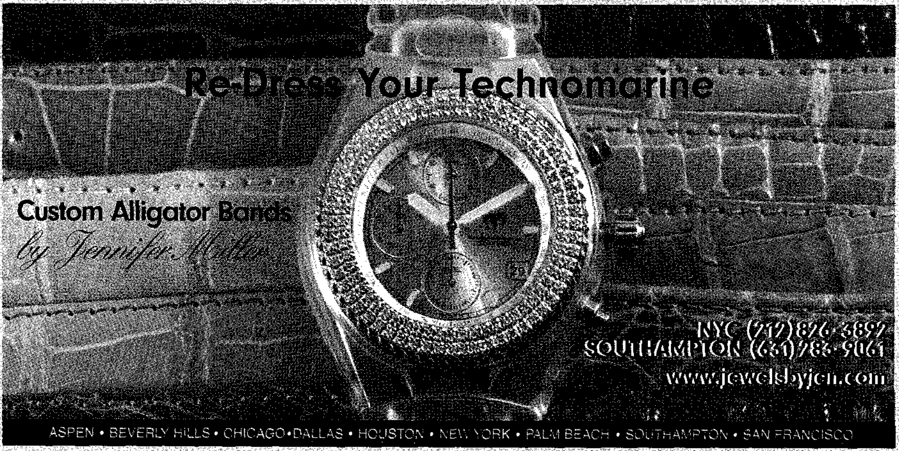

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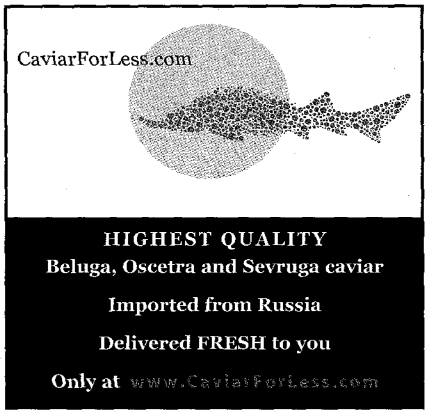
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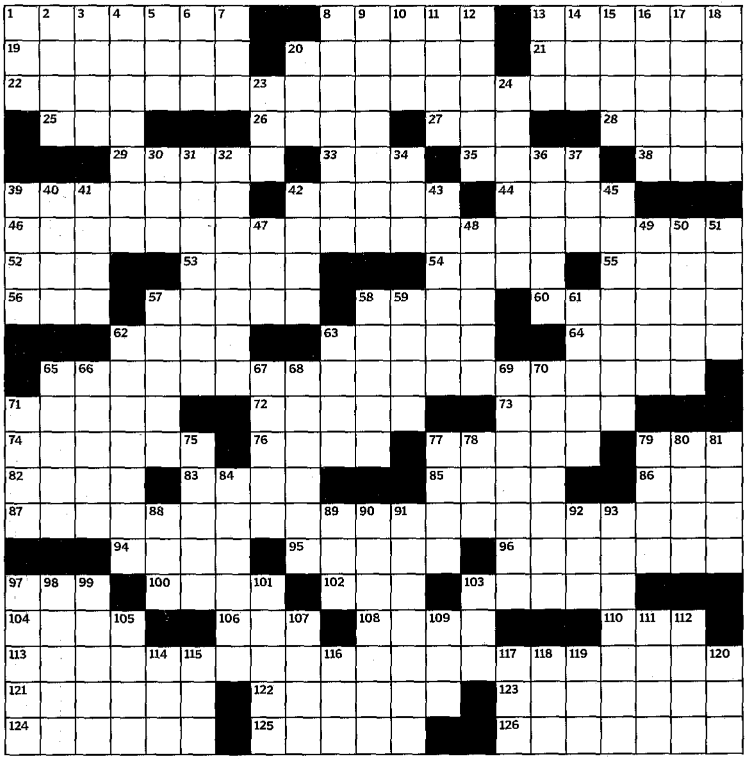


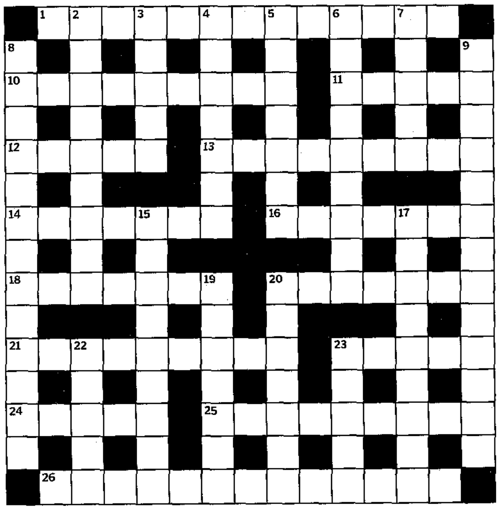
ACROSS

1 Month named for a two-faced god
8 Move on Rollerblades
13 Beaten paths
19 Stockpiles
20 Anthropoid humans
21 Be remorseful
22 Start of a verse
25 Mommy deer
26 Toe woe
27 Kanga's baby
28 Songsmith Paul
29 Baseball's Pee Wee
33 Ply the oars
35 Schleps
38 Psychic's talent, for short
39 Kind of hewing tool
42 Tiny bits
44 Swimmers' segments
46 Verse continued
52 Michigan's Arbor
53 Come down in buckets
54 First-rate
55 Jason's ship
56 Topsoil
57 Inks a contract
58 See 71-Down
60 The "D" in F.D.R.
62 Europe's most active volcano
63 Part of a pound
64 Postponer's promise
65 Title of the verse
71 No longer a minor
72 Emerson's middle name
73 Diva's big moment
74 Whigs' opponents
76 Gaelic dialect
77 Father of Leah and Rachel
79 Reflux of the tide
82 Stumble
83 "Beloved" author Morrison
85 Medical-condition suffix
86 Synonym and anagram of "aye"
87 Verse continued
94 French rival of Vogue
95 Mortar for tiles
96 Takes into custody
97 Tabby
100 Sniggler's catches
102 Plural of "is"
103 "—— the bag!"
104 Double-reed woodwind
106 TV editor played by Ed
108 "Show Boat" composer
110 Slang for a sailor
113 End of the verse
121 Reluctant
122 "Lawrence of Arabia" star
123 Light blonde
124 Half —— (wrestling hold)
125 Sis's sibling
126 Chasms between cliffs

DOWN

1 Chin area
2 In among
3 U.S.-Eur. pact
4 Escorted to a seat
5 Extinguished ember
6 Car of the '20s
7 Fashion monogram
8 Bird of the finch family
9 Convention speech
10 Electrician's abbr.
11 Glum drop
12 See the registrar
13 Attempt
14 Playrm.
15 Important Khan
16 "The Forsyte Saga" heroine
17 Scallions' relatives
18 Leather band
20 "Without further —— . . ."
23 The rocks in "on the rocks"
24 Naval port of France
30 Listen here
31 Leaving the stage
32 Where Dakar is the capital
34 Pallid
36 Played, as at a casino
37 Undercover agent
39 School-home orgs.
40 Cry of disbelief
41 Banks do it
42 Kin of -ologies
43 Fabric stiffener
45 Cabinet member Donna
47 Rosewall of tennis
48 For rent
49 Muse of poetry
50 Resigned Vice President
51 It's in a jamb
57 Each star on the flag
58 Tour leader
59 Division word
61 Puckish
62 Plane curve, in geometry
63 Night people
65 Decorate
66 Sensation-oriented, as tabloid news
67 Jesse of Olympics fame
68 Blender brand
69 Natural environment
70 Blackboard adjuncts
71 Shout of encouragement, with 58-Across
75 Subway go-through
77 Boor
78 "—— was saying . . ."
79 Optometrists' study
80 Kerouac's generation
81 Chocolate and parallel
84 Verdi opera, 1887
88 "—— Buttermilk Sky"
89 Mouths, to Caesar
90 Labors over
91 Like Elizabeth II's demeanor
92 Dernier ——
93 Not brief
97 George M.
98 Higher than
99 Sauna wear
101 Flight-training finales
103 Those elected
105 Muffs it
107 —— snuff (in good shape)
109 Future fish
111 Nabisco best-seller
112 Jack's stalk
114 G.I.'s off-post club
115 Hideout
116 Darlin'
117 And more: abbr.
118 Make a little —— long way
119 Have the deed to
120 Letters on an orthodontist's shingle

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Gordius



ACROSS

1 Ascribe? (8,5)
10 A man's mad about an educated girl he stops to help. (9)
11 Set to become mature without direction. (5)
12 Mountains situated in the Libyan desert. (5)
13 Woman of the streets contrived to ensnare politician? (9)
14 Upper class sort is to provide prospective partners. (7)
16 Gun licence shortly rejected for maker of replica . . . (7)
18 . . . denied necessity to carry a firearm. (7)
20 Made up hard papers? Possibly. (7)
21 Insect consuming article about to end. (9)
23 Indian wonder-worker reported for being a sham. (5)
24 Prison—or prison inspectorate? (5)
25 Treat boil with three swellings. (9)
26 Yes, we'll search for a notable Christian convert. (7,6)

DOWN

2 Putting right engineers in decline. (9)
3 Welsh mythical figure of girl carrying her daughter . . . (5)
4 . . . figure consistent with inexactitudes about the child. (7)
5 So many—up to 500—currently productive. (7)
6 Land on time—from long distance. (5-4)
7 Flower provides king with endless honey. (5)
8 How SAS offense turns into a shedding of blood. (13)
9 Steal proceeds abandoned as church articles. (8,5)
15 Starter for Oxford University boat? (9)
17 Mental patient seen as part of power structure? (9)
19 Conscript given something to float in the river. (7)
20 What critics get—small change for their work. (7)
22 A runner in Xanadu who . . . (5)
23 . . . runs fast at first, then turns slow. (5)

Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 244.

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My first glance fell on
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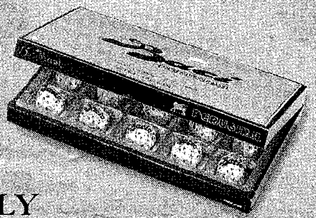
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